

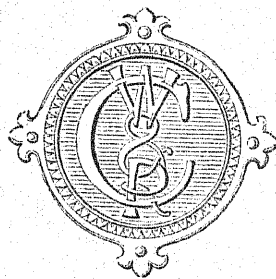
CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

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
Science and Arts

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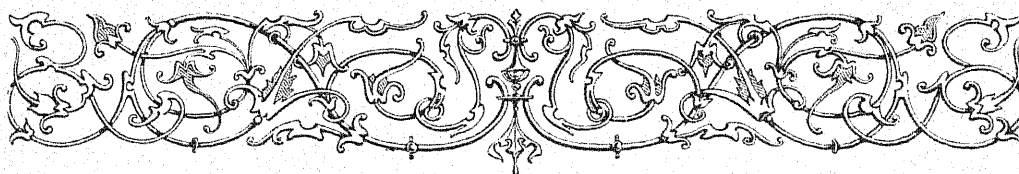


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THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN,

AUTHOR OF 'MASTER OF HIS FATE'; 'A SOLDIER AND A GENTLEMAN,' &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE RETURN OF THE MASTER.

To the æsthetically minded, Southern Lancashire is the most provoking and irritating region within the coasts of Great Britain. It constantly suggests that there might have been unrivalled opportunities for delight in the picturesque and the beautiful, had they not been hewn away, trampled on, or covered up by the remorseless genius of modern Lancashire industry. Here, for instance, is a glen which Nature intended to be as romantic as any in the north, with birch-clothed sides, a clear and frolicsome trout-stream, and turf as soft and scented as the mead of Asphodel. Nature's intention, however, has been thwarted, and before us are merely a convenient hollow and convenient water for dye-works: the skyline is cut by a tall smoking chimney; the upper end of the glen is blocked by a pile of building and a dirty dam; the birches are stunted and blighted by smoke and the gases of filthy chemicals; the stream is choked by ashes and other refuse, and is shrunk to an ashamed and noisome dribble; and the mead of Asphodel is turned into a broad cinder-track for mill-hands and coal-carts. That is a common and saddening sight in Southern Lancashire. Yet are there others where it is pleasant and cheering to see that, under proper and kindly control, the genius of modern industry may have room and verge enough without committing outrage of a wanton kind upon dear Mother Nature. Not very far from the glen (or clough) already indicated there is another—or *was*, a few years ago—where Nature had not been outraged, but only tamed a little. There also were chimney-shafts and buildings and a dam; but the chimneys were

notably tall, so that smoke and acrid vapours were carried far above the glen; the buildings were half-hid by healthy and stalwart elms, and smothered with ivy and flowering creepers; and the dam looked like a natural lake, its wholesome waters being inhabited by fish and water-fowl, and by the homely duck and the stately swan, and its shady banks overgrown with flags and meadow-sweet. There the stream was clear, and frolicked gaily along at its own sweet will, flashing over pebbles and circumventing obstructive boulders, or boldly dashing over them. There, too, the turf was turf, green and sweet, where children romped of an afternoon, lads and lasses walked of an evening, and fairies even danced o' nights to the amazement of the prick-eared, half-tame rabbits. And the kindly arranger and controller of all this was George Suffield, cotton-spinner and calico-printer, and Member of Parliament.

On a certain night late in May, Mr Suffield was walking along the brink of the glen on a foot-path that led from the station. He was returning from a sedulous attention to the legislation of the country to enjoy the brief vacation of Whitsuntide in the bosom of his family. It was very late—almost midnight, indeed—but a full moon illumined all the scene with a pale mystic light—the clough, the park beyond it, with the Hall, towards which its master was making his way, and the village before him with its neat cottages and gardens, and its church standing white in the moonlight with its tower and its tapering spire. Suffield walked like a man well pleased with himself and his kind, bearing his

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bulging Gladstone bag, as he did his years, lightly. He was a man of sixty or more, but he was what is called 'well preserved.' His hair and beard were grizzled, that is to say; but, while tall and strongly built, he was straight and ruddy, and he showed a fine, careless, open front to the world. Whether the influence of the moon or the neighbourhood of the fairies of the clough had touched him, he was in a light and vacant mood. He did not whistle as he went 'for want of thought;' but he hummed little catches to himself, and quoted to himself random scraps from his random reading. The tower of the church which he had built caught his roving eye, and he quoted—not too correctly—

They built up the tower of Jumley-Jee.
They built it up to a goodly height
At eleven o'clock on a Thursday night.

'Why Thursday night?' he asked himself, with a low chuckle of enjoyment of the absurdity of the thing. 'And why on earth at eleven o'clock? Ah, well; I suppose it was just meant to make you laugh; and it does.'

Thus he walked leisurely along, enjoying the soft night-air, enjoying the moonlight, enjoying the fair rich scene spread before him, and enjoying above all the sense that he had become the possessor and controller of all he saw by his own effort. He came of an obscure but sturdy and honest stock. His father had been a farmer and weaver, 'back o' th' White Moss,' in the easy old days before Lancashire industry had become so enormous, congested, and reckless. His parents had given him a sound body and a shrewd head, a large heart and a small education, and by the help of God and of a resolute purpose—and, it must be added, of a good wife, whom he adored—he had done the rest himself. Note him well; for he was of a generation that is fast passing away, a generation whose sons seem to lack much of the old Lancashire 'grit,' and the cheery and intrepid energy that set England in the front of the commerce and the humanity of the world.

As he continued his placid way, suddenly there came from the clough beneath him, and, it seemed to him, from a spot not far off, the squeak of a scared or captured rabbit, and close upon it a soothing and satisfied 'Wir-roo!'

'A poacher! The rascal!' exclaimed Suffield to himself.

Without a moment's hesitation, he set down his bag and slipped over the brow of the clough. He had but turned a hillock when, in the shade of two or three birches, he saw a creature in white—man or woman, he could not tell which—kneeling on the ground and holding a struggling rabbit by the ears.

'Put that beast down!' cried Suffield.

'Ow!' exclaimed the creature, at once dropping the rabbit, which bounded away and disappeared in a hole.

'And who the dickens are you to come poaching here?' demanded Suffield. 'Stand up and show yourself.'

The creature in white stood up, and came softly forward into the full moonlight. Suffield was amused to see the creature resolve itself into a black man with very bright eyes and white

teeth, and wearing a big white turban, a kind of white blouse with an ample red sash, and trousers of some dark material. The black man made a profound obeisance with his black hands crossed upon his white breast.

'Respectable sir,' he murmured in a very soft voice. He said no more, but bowed still lower and slowly shook his head, as if to deprecate the white man's anger.

'Where on earth do you come from?' said Suffield. 'Art a boggart?' he demanded, lapsing into dialect, 'or a kind o' demon fro' th' pit?'

'Respectable sir, no,' answered the black man. 'To speak with regards to your terms, I am not a demon, etcetera. I am Daniel—at your kind, respectable services.'

'What?' laughed Suffield, with a pleasant reminiscence in his mind of the judge in *Pickwick*. 'Daniel Nathaniel, or Nathaniel Daniel?'

'Respectable sir, no,' answered Daniel; 'I am Daniel Trichinopoly. The same time I must say I am servant, dressing-boy, and cook, and have answered to several others' capacity as clerk, store-keeper, etcetera, etcetera to a gentleman staying at the great Hall, namely, the Sahib Raynor.'

'Oh, ah!' exclaimed Suffield. 'You're Mr Raynor's black servant. But why couldn't you say that in so many words?'

'Respectable sir,' answered Daniel, 'I am regret to say that I have said it in so many words as I was able.'

'Ah,' said Suffield, with a laugh, 'I make no doubt you have.—Well, Daniel, your master has arrived then. When did he come? To-day?'

'Respectable sir,' answered Daniel, still with mellifluous precision, 'if care should be taken to be true the Sahib Raynor arrived the day before to-day.'

'But you haven't told me, Daniel, how you came to be snaring my rabbits. The rabbits are mine, you know: I am Mr Suffield.'

'Ah, respectable sir, you are indeed the Sahib Suffield? Large and splendid sir, I kiss your hem;' and he was about to carry his salutation into effect.

'No, no, man; don't do that,' said Suffield hurriedly; for he had the English shame of homage of that grovelling sort. 'Stand up and tell me why you were snaring my rabbits: we call it poaching.'

'Poaching!' Daniel accepted the word with a supple bow. 'Now I must say I am taking myself a walk in the scenery, and I am thinking nicely of the moon of India; the same time my sharp eye see a little wild beast run, and I am say to myself: "The little wild beast is made to catch and cook. I am intention to catch and cook and curry him for my master, the Sahib Raynor, etcetera." With regards, large and splendid sir,' said Daniel, with another humble obeisance, 'I hope I am forgive for my own experience. I am just come the day before to-day, and I am still not learned in the manners, customs, ways, etcetera.'

'But, Daniel,' said Suffield, very much interested and amused, 'I thought a Hindu, or a Buddhist—I don't know which you are—was forbidden by his religion to catch and kill any beast.'

'Large and splendid sir,' said Daniel, in an energy of resentment, 'with regard to above I am not Hindu, I am not Buddhist: I am Christian like my master!'

'H'm, ha,' said Suffield, struck by the reply; 'you've had me there. I suppose that is answer enough—that you are Christian—like your master. You've learned your Christian lesson well. And, now, you're going back to my house, I suppose, Daniel. Let us walk on together.'

'Large and splendid sir,' said Daniel, making another obeisance with his dingy hands crossed on his white breast, 'I will be highly thankful.'

'God made man upright,' said Suffield to himself, 'but he will bow and wriggle.'

So they climbed out of the clough and returned to find Mr Suffield's bag, which Daniel insisted on carrying; and thus they went on their way through the village, past the works, round the head of the clough, across the stream by a pretty rustic bridge, and into the park properly so called. The park was extensive, and the house—Holdsworth Hall—stood on a gentle eminence about half a mile from the works and the village. Mr Suffield and his strange companion therefore had plenty of time to become acquainted with each other. Suffield was one of those of whom Sir Walter Scott approved, who act, consciously or unconsciously, on the great Roman writer's rule—'nihil humani a me alienum puto'—who are familiar and sympathetic, that is to say, with all sorts and conditions of men, and who think no human creature too humble, too stupid, too ignorant, or too foreign to teach them something. From the dusky Daniel—who, closer at hand and in the fuller light, was seen to be not black, but rather brown or coffee-coloured—he learned, what he already knew fairly well, that cotton-spinning and weaving and calico-printing were rapidly becoming great industries about Bombay; moreover, that Daniel himself when a very young man had worked in a cotton mill, and that he had a longing to become better acquainted with cotton-manufacture in general, because he believed—had he not evidence at his elbow in support of his belief?—that that way splendour and fortune lay. It was a memorable conversation, though, like most things memorable, it became so only in the light of subsequent events—events which appertain to this story.

'It's late; you'd better come in this way,' said Suffield, when they had reached the great Hall door. 'Some of the family up, I see: there's light in the dining-room.'

He knocked and rang a loud peal, and a young gentleman in evening dress and a sleepy-looking elderly servant in knee-breeches came to open the door together. Both appeared a little surprised to see the strange companion the master of the house had got.

'Oh, Trichy,' said the young man, *passim*, 'you're out late.'

'Yes, Sahib George,' grinned Daniel—he had clearly got into the way already of regarding 'Sahib' George as an amusing person—'I appear to be.'

'Well, father,' said George, grasping the paternal hand, 'you've come home at last.'

'Yea, lad,' said Suffield; 'and right glad I am to be out o' that big, roaring London.—And how's things?'

'All right, dad.'

It was good to see the looks of affection and confidence that passed between father and son.

'And how's Tummas?' called Suffield after the elderly man-servant, who was retiring in Daniel's company.

'Pretty bobbish, mester,' answered Tummas, 'as the sayin' is.'

'That's all right,' said Suffield. Then in a low voice he remarked to his son: 'He was going away looking rather disappointed. He thought, I suppose, I had forgotten him, poor owd Tummas!—Is your mother up?'

'No,' answered George—'mother has gone to bed.'

'And Uncle Harry?'

'He has gone to bed too,' said George. 'The rest of us have been to the theatre.'

'Oh, it's father!' cried a charming young lady, jumping up and running to Suffield the moment he showed himself in the dining-room.

'Yes, my lass,' said he, taking her in his arms—she was small and slight, though shapely—'it is feyther.—And here's Cousin Isabel too.'

A tall, dark, and strikingly handsome young lady, who had stood waiting with a smile for her turn to be saluted, now came forward. 'I'm here again, you see, uncle,' said she when she had kissed him.

'You can't come too often, my lass,' said Suffield. 'The only mistake you make, as I've told you before, is not to stay here altogether.'

'It's kind of you to say that, uncle, even though you have said it before. But you know I'm an old maid'—

'An old maid!' exclaimed Suffield's daughter, clasping her round the waist. 'Hear her, father! Hear her, George!—An old maid at four-and-twenty!'

'Still, my dear,' said Cousin Isabel, 'like the old gentleman in the play, I protest in the face of Europe that in essence if not in actual fact I am an old maid. I have my own queer, solitary ways that I should not like to give up.'

'Well,' said Suffield, 'you must be fonder o' other people's brats than I should be, Isabel, to spend all your days teaching one lot after another—one down t' other come on.'

'Don't you speak of teaching, uncle,' laughed Isabel, 'rather as if it were fighting?'

'I know I'd rather do the fighting myself.—Have you had supper? I think I'll just have a mouthful.'

He sat down to eat and drink, and the others sat about him.

'Well,' said Suffield, 'tell me what you saw at the theatre. Was it in the play to-night, Isabel, that the old gentleman protested in the face of Europe? I like that saying; "protested in the face of Europe," I daresay, when he was standing in his own back-kitchen.'

'Something like that, uncle,' answered Isabel. 'But it was not in the play to-night; it's in a French play.'

'Oh, ah,' said her uncle; 'a French play: Frenchies say that kind o' thing. What was the play, then, to-night?'

George answered his father in some detail. It was notable that he had not spoken till then, that while Cousin Isabel had been excusing herself, he had appeared uneasy, not to say impatient

and hurt, and that he had cast on her several appealing looks, of which she had remained either unconscious or regardless. About the quality of the play and the players the young people did not agree. Both play and players were London successes—a fact which seemed to subdue what critical judgment the easy and good-natured George possessed: like most of the younger generation, he believed in all things metropolitan; he had his coats, his hats, and his boots made in London; his favourite reading was the London papers; and he was constantly 'running up to town.' His sister, Euphemia, did not even affect to be critical; she bubbled over with direct, unthinking enthusiasm, and thought everything she had seen—especially the dresses—'quite too lovely.' Cousin Isabel, on the other hand, was not only critical, but—it seemed to the others—irreverent and revolutionary. She not only called the play a vulgar travesty of a noble story, but laughed at the silly sentimentalism and the mean and jerky elocution with which the parts had been rendered; moreover, she declared that, if such things continued to be generally admired and praised, the theatre would be as little worth going to as a 'penny reading.' These opinions unutterably disturbed the three Suffields, whose only doubt hitherto had been that the theatre was not morally beyond reproach. And yet they could not ignore or despise what she said; for, apart from the fact that all three were fond of her, they all believed in her cleverness and her judgment, and in her prescriptive right to be severely critical of all things: was she not—though of their family—a teacher in a celebrated Ladies' College in London, and by that token a kind of animate encyclopædia of knowledge?

'Ah, well,' said the benign Suffield, summing up and closing the discussion, 'you're beyond me, Isabel. You strike a high note that I can't reach—a very high note indeed. But tell me—did any of you see Ainsworth there?'

'Of course,' answered the brother and sister together; 'he was there for the paper.'

'That's all right,' said their father. 'He'll settle it for us. We'll see what he says about it in the morning's paper.'

'He won't go against the verdict of London,' said George.

'Oh, won't he?' said his father. 'Perhaps he won't and perhaps he will; but it won't depend on what he cares for what they say or what they think in London. I doubt very much if there's any writer on the London papers cleverer than himself, or as clever. He has a fine head on him, has Alan; he's half Scots and half Lancashire, and he'll go far.—You remember Ainsworth—don't you, Isabel? He's dramatic critic and all the rest of it for the *Gazette*.'

'Oh yes,' said Isabel, 'I remember Mr Ainsworth.'

'Well, now,' said her uncle, looking at his watch, 'it's time we all went to bed.'

When the girls withdrew, he and George went round to see that all doors and shutters were secured, and then ascending to their rooms, they said 'good-night' at the top of the stairs. But on his way to his own room Suffield observed that the door of the great spare room stood open, where, he imagined, Uncle Harry, the 'Sahib' Raynor, was put up. He looked into the room,

and discovered that the bed, though tumbled, was empty. In perplexity and alarm, he called his son softly.

'This is Uncle Harry's room, isn't it?' he asked.

George answered that it was; and he, too, looked in to make sure that Uncle Harry was not playing them a prank; but neither in bed, nor under it, nor in wardrobe or cupboard, could Uncle Harry be found.

'What the dickens can have become of him?' said Suffield. 'Perhaps your mother will know.' He entered his wife's room, and soon returned relieved and chuckling. 'What do you think?' he said to his son. 'Your mother tells me he's camping out! He has been so many years used to sleeping out o' doors, that he can't be comfortable in a proper bed and a proper bedroom, and he begged your mother to let him take a blanket out into the park! He's a caution; but I'll find him i' th' morning.'

CHRISTMAS-TIME IN FLORIDA.

By CHARLES EDWARDS.

As a Briton unused to an excess of vermin and black faces, Jacksonville impressed me most for the enormity of its spiders, its nightly visitations of mosquitoes, and its negro population. There was also the sand. It is one of the sandiest places in the world. A walk of a couple of miles in any direction was no joke; and even in December the noonday sun was not a thing to face with impunity.

I found the city remarkably full of people. The newspapers told in their own sweet way about the extraordinary immigration of delicate Northerners and impecunious Britons into the State. The former were here for the winter, and in my opinion they were not too wise to come to a part of the world which sometimes showed a variation of fifty degrees of temperature in a single day. As for the latter, of course they were after orange groves, fruit farms, and that sort of thing. Without wishing to decry Florida as a field for honest labour and the investment of money, I can't help saying that it is far from being the gold mine it was fancied to be. Orange trees are not robust: a frost plays sad havoc with a crop. Save oranges and garden produce, Florida has next to nothing to offer the worker as a reward for his work. In addition to invalids and immigrants, a British aristocrat or two were here for the shooting. The darkies were profoundly aggrieved to find that these gentlemen differed physically not at all from themselves, save in colour. They expected a lord to be of a more exalted order in human nature.

Our house backed upon the great St John's River, which is such a valuable thoroughfare for the State. Nightly we heard the bellowing of its steamers in the midst of the unpleasant fog of a subtropical kind which veiled it from the sight of the stars. This mist fell upon it soon after the variegated hues of sunset had coloured the sky, and did not lift of a morning until the sun was hot and dazzling in the heavens. It was enchanting to see the cypress and oak on the other bank of the river break through the mist; but the mist itself is sheer poison to certain

constitutions. One understands why the Florida doctors forbid their patients—and even men who are not ill—to stir out of doors after dark, and to be abroad until the day has well advanced. Such injunctions are a notable bar to the enjoyment of life in a strange country.

It was due to the damp of the river that our outbuildings were of the rottenest description, though only a few years old. And no doubt these circumstances favoured our spiders. Of all ghoulish monsters, I wish to see none more odious than the colonies of these spiders that occupied all the available corners of the sheds. Thick-bodied and hairy, with agile hairy legs, it was enough to frighten a timid person to see one of them suddenly scamper in his direction. But our black domestic merely laughed at them, and put her large flat feet upon them when they gave her the chance. She was a merry, irresponsible young person, like most of her kind, and thought nothing of hanging our pyjamas on the prickly pear-tree in the garden, when she wished to air the things. It is easier to hint at than describe the consequences of such a crime. The needles of the pear-tree stuck into us in a hundred places simultaneously.

Of course one does not expect mosquitoes even in Florida in mid-winter—at least in an uncomfortable number. No matter; there they were. Only when a cold snap came and dropped the thermometer to thirty-three degrees or so were our nights quite free from them. At other times their melodious trumpeting sounded in the dark hours and tempted to madness. Many of the visitors to the Southern State carried about with them most uncomely faces, due to the earnest workmanship of these little darlings. You could always at the post-office of a morning—when the 'queue' of strangers waiting for their letters was sometimes thirty or forty feet long—pick out a few individuals who were a sight to distress their parents. On the other hand, the darkies and the primrose-complexioned natives showed no signs of this kind of affliction.

Jacksonville was lively enough after the provincial American fashion. That is to say, it abounded with land-prospectors and land-sellers, who could lie without an effort in the most picturesque fashion; all its hotels and lodging-houses were well occupied; quack doctors paraded the streets with their appanages of sham Indians in sham-Indian war-paint; and after dark the different bar-rooms were noisy. The steamers, too, which arrived and left were crowded to excess. Sleeping accommodation of the orthodox kind on board was only for the fortunate few, and meals were going all day long for the relays who waited for them. One or two of the churches, moreover, had visits from preachers of European fame, and in one of them the soloist in the Te Deum anthem was a young lady with a notorious voice, of which she made the most as she stood on the altar steps facing the congregation, music-copy in hand. Of high-class secular music and other entertainments there was, however, an absolute dearth. Fiddles and concertinas in the bar-rooms—where about ten thousand different drinks at ten cents apiece might be obtained—did not recommend themselves particularly. Perhaps the medical advice about shunning the night-air had something to do with this.

Certainly, except in the main street of the city, if you were out after dark, you seemed to have the world much to yourself.

To form some idea of the State and its development, we travelled for three weeks in it. For the mere novelty's sake this was worth doing. But there was much of extreme interest in the physiognomy of the country, whether as untroubled forest or attractive orange groves, and, to me at least, the settlers also were quite engrossing. We travelled by river steamboat, railway, the inevitable buggy, which bounds over a tree-trunk without capsizing you, and by trading-smack in the Gulf of Mexico. And when we were back again in Jacksonville, having in the meantime become landed proprietors with all the attendant responsibilities, we felt well able to tell all and sundry our opinion of the State.

Nothing was more surprising than the number of Britons upon whom we chanced in out-of-the-way settlements. Sometimes they had their wives with them; more often they were young men working tooth and nail to establish a homestead and income that should enable them to send to the old country for a bride. It was rare in the extreme to find any one who was not hopeful and more than hopeful about his future. Even old men here babbled amazingly about their plans as they led us over their estates and showed us orchards and sugar-plantations which a year or two back were mere pine forest or insalubrious swamp.

One night a lake steamer put us ashore in a spot that gave promise of affording very poor accommodation, if any. The lake was a third-rate water-way, and the steamer was a toy steamer, chartered for the mails and nothing else. However, ashore we went under guidance, and walked for half an hour through a forest, the tall trees of which with their gigantic undergrowth—an unusual feature for Florida—quite hid the stars from us, though these were also well concealed by the omnipresent evil mist. We were received at length in a certain store, feasted in a picturesque fashion on venison and duck—the deer had been shot that afternoon, and hung against the wall—and then put to bed in an outhouse. I cannot say much for the tranquillity of our slumbers. The shed was populous with rats, which raced even over the bed; and there was an owl in the room, which bothered our nerves considerably until we understood it. As this was also one of the 'cold-snap' days, we had a frigid night of it in this well-ventilated bed-chamber. Nevertheless, the morning found us fresh enough, and eager to see what we could of this district.

One of the first scenes that met our eyes after breakfast, when we had driven for a while through an astounding area of orange groves—every tree laden with fruit—did credit to our homeland. We came upon a tiny lake. Near it was a wooden shed, whence the whir of machinery sounded, and towards which a couple of span of mules were dragging pine-logs to be sliced into timber. The presiding spirits of this scene were a stout middle-aged man and his son—a fine hale young fellow; and glad enough were they to stop for a while and gossip with us. They were a couple of Yorkshiremen, a few months only in Florida. And in that time they

had established a trio of orange groves, which promised exceedingly well, built a villa of the usual kind with four rooms, fixed a saw-mill, stocked the little lake hard by with carp, and conceived a few score schemes for their speedy and substantial enrichment. They took us to their house, and regaled us on pork and beans at noon, showed us their poor little sandy garden and their multitudinous poultry, and also showed us, in a packing-case, a piano which had come south from New York in readiness for the arrival from England of the wife and daughters of the elder man. In Yorkshire, these worthy fellows had been common carpenters. In less than a year in Florida they had become settlers of the best class, and enlarged their minds amazingly in the necessary exercise of a number of faculties that in England had lain dormant, or nearly so. But the native instinct was strong in them still; for ere we left them—sounding Florida's praises to the last—they tried with painful earnestness to sell us a horse, and in default of a horse, a shot-gun that 'for turkey was absolutely impossible to beat.'

Green pine forests sweet to smell, with the blue sky overhead; pestilential swamps, with snakes slinking among the logs, and the roots of the cypresses standing quaintly in the water; broad reaches and miles square of tall saw-grass, which would have made us 'tattered and torn' had we tried to cross them; lily lakes, with the snouts of alligators taking the air on the surface, or more often on their banks, dense with varied vegetation; acres upon acres of fascinating orange groves; and here and there a pretty coterie of white clean-looking bungalows, with green shutters, and a knot of extremely tanned gentlemen in scanty raiment to each coterie of houses—such are the conventional sights of inland Florida. The romance of the country is of Nature alone; for though the Spaniards in the sixteenth century gave the State a tincture of modern history, this applies only to a very small part of it. To my mind, at any rate, there was more of the romance of history in the little graveyard to each little village, with the simple inscriptions on the simple wooden crosses, and the thickly intertwined thorn hedges to keep the wild hogs from profaning the enclosures. Now and again we came upon a lady dressed as if she were going to a meet in Leicestershire. Her horse was either with her or not far off; and her husband was within a day's ride of her. There was no mistaking the Briton in her; and one of these settlers told us how she enjoyed the freedom of the life, even though socially it was 'shocking.' But upon the whole the British lady does not seem to thrive here so well as her husband or brothers. The thornfaced graveyards told us this much, and we got enough verbal confirmation of the fact.

We happened to be in one of these remote settlements on a day eventful in the history of the village itself. The oldest inhabitant, in fact the founder of the place, lay dead in his house; and his funeral was to take place in the afternoon. On all sides of the village the pine forest extended. Pine forest and blue sky made up the outlook beyond the houses. The day was enchanting, and I never saw so many different varieties of butterflies in an hour as

here while lounging on the village green with all the male population, waiting for the appearance of the mortuary car. This latter duly came towards us at length. It was the deceased man's own cart, which had carried many a case of his oranges to the nearest place of shipment; and the man's own coloured servant held the horse's head, sobbing without restraint while he walked. All the village and divers outlying settlers were present; and the church, a white-faced pine-panelled building with a belfry, upon which a great gray buzzard had perched, as if to see the procession, was filled with people. The clergyman was an old man, and—they told us—a very intimate friend of the dead man's. Be that as it may, he could hardly go through the service, and the very audible weeping of the congregation seemed to add to his emotion. The climax came, however, when the coffin was unscrewed again before the altar, and nearly every member of the congregation filed past to look once more upon the dead face of the father of the village. The clergyman covered his eyes with his handkerchief, and no one seemed willing to try to control his grief. I was never present at a more moving scene. Its concluding features were comparatively simple. We all followed the old man to the cemetery in the forest, and there he was laid to rest deep in the whitish sand. And ten minutes afterwards the mourners had reminded each other that a duty is owed to the living as well as the dead. The perfume of their cigars as they strolled back to the village was wafted over the newly-made mound and carried far into the forest. But the old clergyman returned to his house by himself, with bent sorrowful head; nor did he smoke like his fellow-men.

This village was in many respects a typical Florida settlement. It was in daily expectation of that curious American characteristic known as a 'boom.' It advertised its charms and pecuniary attractions for capitalists in the newspapers of Jacksonville and New York; and its wide-awake citizens closed about the stranger at their hotel, as if they were determined he should not leave them till he had bought a hundred or two acres of their land. The hotel keeper was of course in collusion with the citizens. The consequence was that we were bothered almost out of our few wits by the pertinacity of our visitors. At breakfast and dinner we were surrounded by gentlemen with land to sell, and they much interfered with our appetite. We could not even stroll into the hotel garden to pick our dessert from the trees—a privilege readily allowed—without an escort, and the oranges served as a text for new orations about the peculiar fitness of the surroundings for orange groves or aught else.

Christmas Day came upon us while we were thus wandering in the Florida wilds. It seemed as unlike Christmas weather as it well could be. We anchored for the festival at the city of Tampa on the Gulf coast. Somehow, I do not think with impartial respect of this city of Tampa, important and rather pretty place though it is. That is because it laid me up with an attack of dysentery, however, and so the fact need not stand to Tampa's discredit. Of all white places, commend me to this. Its sand is quite

preposterous, and far into the forest the ruts which indicate its highways towards other towns were almost deep enough for the interment of a body.

A thermometer at eighty-five degrees seemed inconsistent with plum-pudding and roast turkey. Still, we remembered the home traditions, and so did the host of our hotel. And afterwards we reposed in hammocks hung between the orange trees of the orchard, and smoked cigars, while wondering what England would think if it could suddenly on this 25th of December exchange skies with Florida. In the evening we strolled towards the quay to see the coral and gold and pale purple of the heavens in their brief twilight afterglow. The air was heavy with the perfume of orange and lemon flowers, and soft and caressing to a marvel. Sounds of revelry reached us from the shanties of the coloured people, who abound in Tampa, and who love all holiday pretexts. And a pair of small black uelins preceded us jocosely down the yielding street with a sugar-cane between them, each chewing at his own end. When we caught the youngsters, for the jest's sake we asked them what they meant by such conduct. 'It's Christmas, sarr,' replied the bolder of the two. Then down went the sun over the still silvery surface of the Bay, and for a few moments Tampa and its forest setting stood out in strong relief, until the mist began to steal over all things, including the opaline sky above us.

When we were again in Jacksonville, our opinion of Florida was almost exalted enough to match that of the land-agents themselves. Subsequent experiences, however, have duly moderated our enthusiasm. It is, after all, a country like other countries—with advantages and defects that equitably dovetail in each other.

ISABEL DYSART.*

By Mrs OLIPHANT.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'You will have to make up your mind, my bonnie woman. Lads like you will not hang on for ever at the pleasure of a—bit slip of a creature like you.'

'You were going to call me a worse name,' cried Isabel.

'Well: I was maybe going to call you a little flirt of a thing that delighted in mischief, and in turning older folk round her little finger.'

'Whatever I do, I cannot turn you round my little finger, mother! You just sit there and smile, and hear everybody speak, and do what you've settled to do. I would sooner try to draw Edinburgh Castle down from the rock than to change your mind; and what do I care for Uncle John or Aunt Mary—or—or a few lads, if you make me say it: when you just sit smiling there like Arthur's Seat and never mind!'

'Well, my dear, you are grand with your

similes; but the Castle Rock and Arthur's Seat are curious images for me.'

Mrs Dysart looked out of the seat in the window which she always occupied, upon the objects of which she spoke. It was a small square window, placed in a deep little recess in the thick wall, filled with greenish glass in small panes: and the prospect visible from it was no less than the distant city of Edinburgh—the Castle rock standing up upright through the mist, and the great Salisbury Crags, and the softer slope of Arthur's Seat clear to the east, in misty sunshine. These salient points were by so much the most important things in the landscape and world, that they continually came into the talk, as they were always in the vision, of the people about. The room inhabited by these two people was an old-fashioned, low-roofed room with five windows, from two or three of which this matchless view was to be seen. One of the others looked straight into a great ash, a sort of forest in itself; and the last was over a bright, old-fashioned garden full of flowers and light. The walls were covered with the abundant growth of a jargonelle pear-tree, upon which the pears had lately hung thick, ripe, and beautiful to behold. The flowers in the garden were chiefly dahlias, brilliant though unattractive; but this was partially made up for by the beds of mignonette, in its full autumnal flower, filling the whole atmosphere with a mild sweetness. The house was all old-fashioned, and so was the mistress of it, sitting in what was considered in those days an easy-chair, with stiff arms and a high seat, which gave her a dignity of which our low and luxurious seats are destitute. She had her feet upon a footstool, and a work-table open at her side with all the implements of her sewing arranged in blue silk compartments. Her dress was of black silk, not high to the throat, but closing over a spotless handkerchief of white net; and she wore a long white muslin apron reaching almost to the bottom of her gown. Her white cap was tied by white ribbons under her chin. There could not have been a more pleasing picture of a mother; but this garb, though so pretty in itself, made her perhaps look older than a woman of her years should have looked. Our mothers were certainly older in those days than the mothers of girls of twenty are now.

Isabel, however, was more than twenty by a few years. She had remained unmarried much beyond the tradition of her family, 'till it was just a scandal,' her aunt said. She was so far before her age that the mischance of being too well off, too happy at home, which interferes so much with marriages nowadays, showed itself already in this young woman, so advanced for her period; though, indeed, there was perhaps another obstacle in the fact that Isabel was the youngest—the only one left at home—and that when she finally made up her mind to leave her

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mother's house, Wallyford would be but a solitary place and Mrs Dysart a dweller alone. I do not mean to assert for a moment that this fact would have prevented Isabel's marriage had she made up her mind; for Mrs Dysart was not only a woman of great resolution, but of indomitable pride, and would no more have permitted a daughter's sacrifice than she would have allowed herself to stand in need of being taken care of. 'Me! to keep my bairn out of her natural life!' she would have said. There was a great deal of philosophy in the well-braced-up and independent mind of a woman of the better class of rural respectability—having no pretension, however, to be of a county family or superior to her neighbours—in those days: and a strong stand for what was natural and lawful and of good report. If her heart sometimes sank to think what her lonely days and lonely house would be when Isabel was gone, yet no cloud was ever visible upon her comely forehead on this account. It was the course of Nature. The last thing in the world which she would have accepted or agreed to was that Isabel should not marry. That was inevitable; as for herself, she would make up her mind to it as mothers have had to do since the world began.

'My dear, it's easy to speak of the lads and of doing what you like with them, at present. I'll not say for the minister. He's so superior to you, Bell, that he will just say, "It's her way, poor lassie," and give in to you however camstairly you may be; but yon doctor-lad is a dour fellow. I would not like, for my part, to take it upon me to oppose him.'—

'Superior to me!' cried Isabel; 'that's not the way to make me take to him, mother—though I know you were always in his favour. Superior! I would like to see the man!'

'That would say that? He'll not say it, my dear; but he's a man that is above the common clashes and little ways of thinking. He would not even feel it; he would say to himself, "Poor bit thing; she has her nerves and so forth;" or, "She's more sensitive than I am;" or'—

'I know you were always in his favour, mother,' said Isabel stiffly. 'A minister! That goes above everything with some folk. And you never could put up with poor Willie Torrence.'

'Put up with him!' said Mrs Dysart. 'I can put up with just anything. Have I not put up with your sister Jennie's man, that makes me grind my teeth every word he speaks?—Oh yes, I'll put up with him! but how you are to do it, yourself!'

'We'll see about that,' said Isabel, flushed and rebellious. Opposition made her instinctively turn in the forbidden direction, which Mrs Dysart was too wise a woman not to know. But our wisdom does not always guide our actions: or perhaps, indeed, she meant to move her child to a decision whatever it might be—thinking that better than the uncertainty in which, so far as Isabel herself was concerned, there was a vague pleasure. 'The little cutty was fond of having all the lads in the parish after her,' her Aunt Mary said. It is to be hoped that there were more 'lads' (which is a word that ought to be pronounced, as everybody knows, with a very broad vowel—not exactly 'laud,' as it is written by the ignorant Southron, but something inclin-

ing thereto) in the parish of Tranent than the young minister and the young doctor; and perhaps it was scarcely respectful to call a 'placed minister'—not a young probationer; to whom the title is specially appropriate—a lad. But Nature will be Nature even when the gravest title is put before a young man's name. Bishops even and Reverend Doctors make love and marry, and lay themselves open to undignified appellations sometimes—and the Reverend Mr Murray was a young man in fact as well as in sentiment. And he was a handsome young man, much more so than Torrence, the young doctor, whose qualities were as different as possible from those of the mild Murray—a sharp, quick-witted, practical-minded, yet, in his grim way, enthusiastic medicine man, eager in everything that concerned his profession, and sure, everybody said, to rise in it.

That, perhaps, was one thing which attracted Isabel. She, too, was full of spirit and ambition, not content to settle down quietly and tend the sheep in the quiet parish in which she had been born, if there was a prospect of something more stirring and exciting outside in the bigger world. The stir of the atmosphere about Torrence, the new wonders of science and discovery of which he spoke, and even his contempt for the stagnation of the rural world about, had a charm for this inexperienced girl. And yet there were things that jarred. It is rare when there is not something that jars between a young man and a young woman thus hesitating before the decision. While the tide has not yet completely carried away their lingering feet, the steps always keep starting from each other more or less, here and there. The man has his own side of this question, which, to do him justice, he does not, either by himself or his exponents, much dwell upon; but the girl's little starts and pauses, her moments of alarm and uncertainty, the quick impression of a moment against, as well as the impulse towards, the man who is her fate, are often very apparent and very interesting. Isabel was in this condition now. The tide was drawing her on sometimes with a very swift impulsion, swifter than she was at all aware of; but now and then there came a sudden start and stop.

Willie Torrence had been her playfellow when they were children, and she had been accustomed to his constant society all her life. She had a hundred recollections of him through all his boyhood, not all of them favourable; sometimes there would leap into her mind a sudden picture of something he had said or done years ago—something, nothing—a look, a gesture which would cause one of these starts aside—though, indeed, he had just been as other boys, and Isabel had always liked him. Nothing like this ever occurred in respect to young Mr Murray, who was good, and nice, and handsome, and far more respectful, even reverential, of the woman in her than Torrence—so respectful, indeed, that Isabel, knowing she was not Miranda or Rosalind, was sometimes a little humbled, but much oftener, I am afraid, amused by his persistent imputation of all their splendours and delights to a little country girl by no means accustomed to such poetical adoration. Torrence's light call to 'Bell,' whom he had so addressed when she was a baby, was often more congenial to her than the 'Miss

Isabel, with the accent on the first syllable of her name, which the minister uttered as if it were the name of a Queen: and yet—

'I wish,' said Mrs Dysart, 'if you have nothing else to do, that you would go down to your uncle, Isabel, and see if there's any more news about these dreadful things in Edinburgh. It is the day for the *Courant*, and he will be very full of it. I am not a person for murders and such awful stories: but Lord bless us, a thing that is just a danger and a horror to us all'—

'What should we have to do with it in a quiet country place?' said Isabel: but she said it simply out of contradiction, with the natural instinct of a healthy girl. For as a matter of fact, she had herself been very much more nervous about the bit of road which lay under the shadow of the old house of Wallyford, a great old roofless and ruinous mansion within a stone's throw of the little Wallyford of to-day—since the dreadful news had come from Edinburgh of the murders of Burke and Hare, which scared the whole country-side far more than any crime of a more usual kind could have done. It was such a horror and a mystery as might well disturb the imagination. And it was a bad time altogether for the popular fancy. Stories of resurrection men and of desecrated graves were rife, and chilled the mind with horror, and the dreadful revelation of mysterious murders, how many and by what means accomplished no one could yet tell, gave a sombre excitement to the public, which had not the incessant reports we have now to satisfy its curiosity and subdue its terrors. A weekly paper was the most that any one had to bring him information of what went on from day to day, and even that was a luxury which but few allowed themselves for their own enjoyment alone. 'A look at the *Courant*,' or a share with three or four others in the *Scotsman*, according to the politics of the reader, was all that most people allowed themselves. Uncle John, as an old navy man, was staunch for Church and State, and took the *Courant*, while the *Scotsman* was Mrs Dysart's paper. She had a kind of surreptitious advantage in consequence, getting as it were two sets of news.

The house of Wallyford was an old-fashioned two-storied house, with a rounded projection on one side for the ample staircase, which was lit by a large long window: a cosy kitchen downstairs, with a red brick floor, through which the family went and came, leaving the front door for great occasions, was occupied by one large and powerful maid-servant, who performed all the work of the house, and was capable of as much again, even though the caps and kerchiefs of the Mistress were, as Janet said, very 'fyky,' and took a great deal of ironing.

'You'll be gaun out, Miss Isabell,' said Jenny—with the accent on the last syllable—which was a self-evident observation.

'Yes, I am going out,' said Isabel; 'and Jenny, you'll mind to take my mother her cup of tea.'

'The Mistress'll no want while I'm to the fore,' said Jenny with a glance of indignation. Five-o'clock tea did not exist formally in these primitive days, but 'a cup of tea' has always been an institution.—'And you'll be hame yourself in good time?' Jenny added, coming out to the door to look after her young mistress. 'The

days are just creeping in dreadful, and the road's lonesome in the dark.'

To this Isabel vouchsafed no reply. The road was not lonesome to her, who knew every step of it, if it was not perhaps just that bit already referred to where the great ruined house of Wallyford stood out with its roofless gables against the sky, casting a shadow which was blacker than anything Isabel knew. It was a bright October afternoon, and the sun was still high over Edinburgh Castle, shining red through the misty atmosphere and smoke which gave its name to Old Reekie. The trees were almost as bright in their garments of many colours as the sky—save those big ashes which still retained their green, and added to the shadows round the old house. Isabel went briskly along towards Musselburgh in her short-waisted, long-skirted pelisse of dark blue cloth, a slim figure with the lightest step in the world skimming over the long road. She was turning over her own little problem in her mind—which, indeed, was no little problem to her, but concerned her whole life—when she set out: but the air and the freshness of the ruddy afternoon, lighted up by the glory of the trees, all red and golden, and the warmth of the sun, which threw a long shadow in front of her as she went towards Musselburgh, and the distant gleam of the bay before, its great waters glowing and heaving in the ruddy westering light—soon blew away everything save that nameless exhilaration of youth which movement and exercise and air bring back, whatever preoccupation may have momentarily driven it away. Isabel had forgotten all about Burke and Hare, and indeed had ceased entirely to think of Willie Torrence and the Rev. James Murray, for some time before she arrived at the door of her uncle John, who lived in a cosy little house surrounded by a shrubbery, on the way to the sea.

Uncle John was an old sailor, not holding any very high grade in the navy, but dignified in his retirement by the title of Captain; and his wife, a pretty little round-faced woman, fond of pink ribbons in her cap and everything that was cheerful. The old skipper took his walk to Fisherrow every morning to the pier and harbour, to give his opinion upon the weather and hear what boats were out, and the fish that had been caught, and anything that might have happened to the *Lively Peggy* or the *Bonnie Jean*, or any other of the little red-sailed, heavy-timbered fleet. But that duty accomplished, without which it was doubtful whether the little port and the proper sequence of good and bad weather could have been duly regulated, established himself for the rest of the day in his dining-room, he on one side of the fire, and his wife on the other, not ill pleased to hear a visitor at the door. It was a high day when it was the day for the newspaper, into which he plunged the moment his early dinner was over, while she sat patient, yet excited, waiting for the pieces of news which he read aloud. People thought it rather grand and decidedly extravagant of Captain John to take in the *Courant* for his own reading, instead of thriftily sharing the price with two or three neighbours: but then, to be sure, he and his wife had no children, no sons to set out in the world, which made a great difference: and they were very good about lending it in the end of the week.

The newspaper day was the only day when this good couple did not care for visitors, and it was with an exclamation of relief that Aunt Mary cried out, 'Eh, it's just Easabell,' when the door opened, making the girl 'Come in to the fire,' with a delighted welcome. 'Ye'll no disturb your uncle in his reading; and I have just an uncommon fine seedcake, new cut, to keep you going,' she whispered, setting Isabel down on a chair close to her uncle, who patted her arm affectionately, by way of greeting, as he went on. There was nothing unusual in this welcome to Isabel, who accepted the slice of cake with a smile, and did her best to bring down her mind to Uncle John's reading, which was emphatic if not very steady, since the good man had a way of losing his place.

'You're a great interruption to the reading,' said the old gentleman, when this happened, patting Isabel again with his large soft hand. 'You little thing, you put everything out of her head. She was breathless a moment since to hear of Burke and Hare—and now she's forgotten everything but a piece for Isabell.'

'It's an awful story,' said Aunt Mary, sitting down again. 'It's gruesome to hear of such things.'

'Such things! There's been nothing like it in my time,' said Uncle John. 'And these doctors—I cannot think but they're just as bad as the murderers themselves.' He brought down his fist upon the table with a subdued exclamation, which was not adapted for publication. 'I'd swing them up to the yardarm alongside of the butchers themselves,' he cried.

'Oh John!' cried Aunt Mary; 'well-educated, clever men!'

'And all the worse for that,' said the sea-captain—then he resumed his reading; and Isabel, too, fell under the fascination of the terrible tale. Besides, was not that what she had come for, to take the fresh news to her mother? What with the reading, and what with the commentaries upon it, the twilight had begun to fall before she sprang up and declared she must run home. 'Before it gets dark. I'll be frightened to pass the old house,' cried the girl.

This was the reason why she was so late on the road, which indeed was lonesome in the dark, though so familiar. Isabel hurried on with her heart beating, and a sensation of fright quite unusual to her. I remember, many years later, how almost every child in Scotland trembled for the possibility of something pouncing upon it out of every dark corner, a dreadful hand upon its mouth. To hear of that traffic in death when it had just happened was certainly more appalling still. She hurried along, trying to think of something else, until there rose before her the great old house of Wallyford, its roofless gables relieved against a sky still blue in the lingering evening light, but casting shadows of inky darkness on the road which wound under its walls. What a place for a horrible wretch to start out to seize unseen the hapless victim! To be sure, these men were in prison; they could do no more harm—but—; to be sure, there never were any villains like that about our countryside: to be sure—

But just as she came to the edge of the shadow,

something did dart out upon Isabel. She gave a great cry of horror, and fled, but was caught by a strong arm. And then there rang a loud laugh into her ears. 'Did you think I was going to Burke you, Bell?'

But the shock was too much for the girl. 'Oh Willie Torrence, Willie Torrence, how dare you frighten me so?' she cried, and burst into wild tears. In his arms! it made her furious afterwards to remember—but at the moment she had no power of escape from that bold kiss with which he took advantage of the panic he had caused.

PARLIAMENTARY MANNERS AND HUMOURS.

A BYGONE Speaker publicly observed upon a notable occasion from his chair of state that the House of Commons is 'no school for manners.' In more recent times the same qualified reproach may occur to the minds of outsiders, who occasionally read newspaper reports of parliamentary scenes and episodes more lively than courteous. The popular representative assembly, nevertheless, expects all its members to obey a code of etiquette which, whilst it allows them a good deal of latitude in some respects, yet regulates even minute points of behaviour with an exacting rigour unknown to the general public. There is no written law on the subject—no book to instruct novices in the traditional customs of the legislative chamber. New members of the new Parliament and their friends, as well as other readers, may therefore be interested in a brief account of some of the ceremonial conditions imposed upon her household by the 'Mother of Parliaments.'

One of the first peculiarities to strike a visitor is the freedom which permits members to keep on their hats during the progress of public business. But this liberty has its limits. A member may not wear his hat as he enters or leaves the House, or when he stands at the bar, although he may put it on as soon as he takes his seat. If a colleague engages in conversation with him, he uncovers his head, and so must he of course when he rises to address the House. Another requirement is that a member must only make a speech from one of the accustomed seats, never from the entrance, the bar, or the gangway. The same rule is observed when he rises to order in the course of debate; but if he raises a point of order concerning a division which has been already called, he must keep his seat and speak with his hat on. Even the Speaker in such cases does not rise when he interposes with his ruling, so that the proceedings assume a somewhat easy-going conversational character. On one occasion of the kind, the late Professor Fawcett, who then sat below the gangway, was unable, being blind, to find his own hat quickly enough. He overcame the emergency, however, by borrowing the well-known soft cap of his neighbour, Mr Joseph Cowen, which, although it neither fitted nor suited him, yet served the purpose of the moment. The effect was ludicrous, but not more so than at another similar crisis when Mr Gladstone hastily borrowed the hat of another occupant of the front Opposition bench, and found it so much too small

for him that he had to hold it on until the point in dispute was settled.

Although members are naturally expected to rise when delivering a speech, exceptions are made in favour of any who from sickness or infirmity are unable to stand. This allowance had of course to be always made in the peculiar case of the late Mr Kavanagh, an Irish member who, although without arms or legs, yet proved himself thoroughly capable, when carried to his place, of performing all the duties of a legislator. Members are constantly either coming or going in the course of debate, and, as common politeness would suggest, none may pass between the Speaker and the gentleman who is addressing the House. Any infraction of this or the other rules is promptly challenged on all sides by loud cries of 'Order,' amid which the possibly unintentional offender hurries away, more or less abashed, to avoid more serious consequences. In addition to these rules, from which even silent members are not exempt—and many have been in the House of Commons for years without making a speech—there are other points to be kept in mind by those who from time to time join in the debates. For instance, the reading of a prepared written speech is not allowed in either House, although frequent reference may be made to copious notes. It is true that extracts from other documents may be openly read, but this permission does not apply to extracts from printed reports of speeches, made in the same session. Here we detect a curious survival of the old idea that the publication of parliamentary debates is a breach of privilege. The rule has of late years been relaxed to the extent of permitting members to read from any book or even from newspaper reports of speeches in former sessions. Although it is considered highly improper to sit reading a newspaper in the House, and although technically the reporters in nightly attendance are strangers, present only on sufferance, every legislator fully recognises the power of the press, and special facilities are of course afforded for reporting the debates. Whilst freedom of speech is claimed and exercised in what has been called the grand inquest of the nation, jealous care is taken that it does not degenerate into license. It is forbidden to introduce the Queen's name in debate to influence the decisions of either House, Her Majesty being constitutionally placed above and outside the warfare of political parties. Nor may any speaker in either House make direct allusion to the other branch of the legislature; he must simply refer to it vaguely as 'another place.' This rule is founded on the notion that the doings of one House are unknown to the members of the other House, except where formally communicated; but it has also been explained by an eminent authority as designed to guard against recrimination and offensive language or frivolous retort between members of two distinct bodies. In the House of Lords every member is referred to only by his rank—as 'the noble Marquis'—or by his office—as 'the right reverend prelate.' Members of the House of Commons, unlike the peers, may not address each other or the House at large in public debate, but only the Speaker, as the chosen representative of all; and they may not refer to each other by name, but by the constituencies they represent or the office they hold.

Special care is taken to prevent as far as possible any unseemly or personal altercation amongst themselves on the part of the members of either House. If unbecoming language is used, the Speaker has large powers of reproof, and even of punishment; but it requires some familiarity with parliamentary usage to know when the bounds of propriety are overstepped. Fine distinctions are sometimes drawn as to what is permissible. Thus, it is not considered decorous to declare in debate that an opponent's words are false; nevertheless, you may emphatically deny the truth of them. In like manner you may, if a member, contemptuously declare your indifference to statements coming from 'such a quarter,' but not from 'such a man'—the latter form of words being considered too personal. If a member disregards the authority of the Chair, or, abusing the rules of the House, wilfully obstructs its business, he may be punished in ordinary cases by a week's suspension for the first offence, two weeks for the second, and a month for the third. This does not exempt the excluded member from serving on any private Bill Committees to which he had previously been appointed. Nor does it deprive the House of the power of proceeding against the offender, if so advised, more severely, in accordance with ancient usages.

The Speaker, after having called attention to the misconduct of any member who persists in irrelevance, or tedious repetition either of his own arguments or those used by other members in debate, may direct him to discontinue his speech. In like manner the closure may be moved if the whole debate is being obviously carried by any number of members to undue length for the purpose of wasting time. The general body of members, whilst usually forbearing, are not themselves backward on occasion in indicating their impatience of tiresome reiteration. One effective way of stopping notorious bores is by coughs, conversation, cat-calls, farmyard sounds, and loud cries of 'Vide.' Indignant at some such interruption, Daniel O'Connell once declared that he was not to be put down by 'beastly bellowing,' and on another occasion Burke announced that he would not be silenced by 'such yelping.' The Speaker or Chairman of Committees may order a member whose behaviour is disorderly to withdraw himself for the remainder of that day's sitting. The Speaker may also 'name' such member, and then ask the House formally to pronounce upon his conduct. To name any one means that he has so conducted himself as to cease for the time to be worthy of being treated as a representative member. The gravity of this distinction has not always been duly appreciated. Fox relates an amusing case in point. During debates it was the custom of Speaker Onslow, when any member was guilty of irregularity, to call out, 'Take care, or I'll name you.' On one occasion, in April 1804, a defiant member, not much alarmed by the customary threat, asked coolly, 'And suppose you do name me, what will be the consequences?' 'The consequences!' replied the Speaker, 'God knows.'

Speaker Abbott had a clearer view of the matter. In his time a member, entering the House after dinner in too merry a mood, made

some disparaging remarks about its Chairman, and, it is said, actually called upon him for a song. The Speaker thereupon 'named' the offender, and banded him over to the custody of the serjeant-at-arms. Next day the flippant prisoner, now a sad and sober man, was brought to the bar, solemnly rebuked for his levity, and then discharged, after paying the customary fees on his release.

Any new member when first introduced to be sworn has to be escorted from the bar by two parliamentary friends of older standing, one on each side of him. At a given signal, the three advance slowly towards the clerk's table, where the oath is administered, and the roll signed by the newcomer. In their progress up the floor of the House, they must bow three times to the Speaker. A like obeisance has to be made on other occasions, as when the Usher of the Black Rod comes in stately procession to summon the attendance of Her Majesty's faithful Commons to the House of Lords, for the purpose either of listening to the Queen's Speech at the commencement of the session, or to hear a formal intimation, in old Norman-French, of the royal assent to Bills which have passed both Houses. So carefully is the people's chamber guarded against the intrusion even of lordly or royal emissaries, that the door of the House is always shut and bolted on the approach of Black Rod. It is not until he has knocked three times that the door is opened for his admission—a ceremonial denoting that the House reserves to itself the right to refuse entrance to any stranger.

Whilst these quaint trivialities indicate that the House of Commons is extremely jealous of any encroachment from outside upon its honour and dignity, there have been times when members themselves have flagrantly violated the respect it claims. For instance, in a debate in 1774, Mr Howard, M.P., alluding to proceedings connected with Mr Wilkes' election, said he agreed with that able lawyer, Sir Fletcher Norton, who had declared that he valued the resolution of the House of Commons no more than the resolution of a set of drunken porters. Again, during a debate in 1782 on Mr Pitt's motion for a reform in Parliament, Sir Charles Turner said he considered the House of Commons as a parcel of thieves who had stolen an estate, and were afraid of letting any person look into the title-deeds, through fear of losing it again.

In these early days, when legislators were apparently less accustomed to control their tempers, it is not surprising that one of the rules of the House—still enforced—was that neither spurs nor swords should be worn by members in attendance. But this prudent ordinance was sometimes resisted, as by one Earl of Ormonde, who in the Upper House told the Usher of the Black Rod, who had reminded him of the rule, that he should have no sword of his, except through his (the Usher's) body!

Although it is often assumed that the arts of obstruction are a modern growth, parliamentary records show that in old times they were practised on even such a trifling pretext as the question of candles. The House is now lighted by electricity, but before the times of gas, lamps and candles had of course to be used. Candles, how-

ever, were not at first allowed to be brought in without a motion regularly made and seconded for that purpose, and an order of the House pursuant thereto. Sometimes the question was debated until it became so dark that the members scarcely saw one another; indeed, this became a favourite way of delaying the business before the House. In order to check the evil, it was at last determined, in 1717, that the serjeant-at-arms have candles brought in when necessary without any express and formal order for that purpose.

Considering the strict propriety with which the business of Parliament is now, as a rule, conducted, it may shock many persons to learn that there was a time when the House of Commons had many of the characteristics of a taproom. History records that members, when in attendance, used occasionally to indulge themselves in the use of the fragrant weed; but a standing order, about the middle of the seventeenth century, decreed that 'no member must presume to smoke tobacco in the gallery or at the table of the House.' Spacious smoking-rooms are now provided, and also ample facilities for obtaining either dinners or other refreshment. There was a time when members ate nuts and oranges in the House, but now they are not allowed to partake of what are called tangible refreshments within the legislative chamber. The only exception is a glass of water, more or less qualified, to refresh any member thirsty or exhausted during the delivery of a speech.

More diligent than in its unreformed days, the House of Commons now scruples to adjourn on account of Derby day; but in early times it indulged in a holiday upon occasions which modern readers must consider still more strangely inadequate. Horace Walpole mentions in his *Memoirs* that in March 1751 the House adjourned to attend at Drury Lane Theatre, where *Othello* was to be acted by a Mr Delaval and his family. Again, in February 1781, a Bill introduced by Mr Burke with reference to the Civil List was read a first time; but the second reading was deferred to that day fortnight, 'because the 21st was to be a feast-day, and the 22d was the benefit of Madame Vestris, the favourite French dancer at the Opera.' Even when in session, the House was much given to amuse itself with petty or frivolous incidents, as is shown by some singular entries preserved in the official records. Under date May 1604, it is noted that a jackdaw flew in at the window. This was considered ominous, and apparently it proved a bad omen for the Bill in debate, as the measure was soon afterwards rejected. Again, we are told by the veracious *State Chronicle* that in May 1614 'a dog came into the House, a strange spaniel, mouse-coloured.' About one hundred and seventy years later, it is recorded that another canine intruder entered the House, taking his seat before the Speaker and all the Government. Not content to remain a silent spectator, the dog joined in the proceedings by barking loudly. Lord North, then Prime Minister, was speaking, and jocularly appealed to the Speaker, saying, 'Sir, I am interrupted by a new member.' The dog, unabashed, did not take the hint, but resumed his barking, whereupon the good-humoured Premier kept up the joke, protesting that 'the new member had no right to

speak twice in the same debate.' In much more recent times almost equally trifling episodes have been known to relieve mightily the tedium of political contention.

A MURDEROUS MIXTURE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

'You silly boy! You never seem to recollect that I was twenty years old—a woman grown—when you were born.' She never lets me forget it. But it was no fault of mine that she was the first and I was the last of our family; and I do protest against Adelgitha at fifty-five treating me at five-and-thirty as if I was still the little boy she used to pet and amuse.

Between ourselves—strictly mind—Del is a great trial to me. For the last ten years, during which period I have been a clerk in the Local Government office, and the tenant of a charming cottage at Lambstead, she has kept house for me, and beginning largely, in my belief, this has gradually year by year fined down very small, till now, when I have no hope whatever of any eligible *parti* coming to ask my consent to his union with my sister Adelgitha.

Well, there are not husbands enough for all of them; so I make the best of it; though, still between ourselves—for I would not have her know a word of it on any account—it has kept me single, and made me devote the love within my breast to flowers, over which it has glowed like sunshine, and no doubt been the active principle in my success with prize pansies at so many shows.

I resisted her at first, but I had to give in. For Del said it was horribly selfish of me to monopolise the garden; and, to quiet her, I purchased a pretty greenhouse, had it erected; and it immediately became a temple in which she was the presiding goddess—a sort of elderly Flora. But I had the stoking to do; and I plead guilty to having stoked the greenhouse fire in a most undignified way, and said things that will not bear repetition in print. Still, I stoked, and have gone on stoking year after year.

'Never mind,' I said to myself; 'it pleases her;' and I held my tongue, being rewarded with the announcement that I had been 'very good;' and Del went on gardening in her way, I in mine.

So I stoked; found her in pocket-money to buy fresh plants and necessities, down to the long brass squirt which would always send water where it was not wanted.

'Anything for a quiet life,' I used to say; and all was peace as long as Adelgitha simmered gently in her conservatory: but when she boiled over out of it, and into my garden, I grew wroth.

Like Russian usurpations, it began by degrees, and the insertion of the thin end of the wedge. How could I object to her poking snails out of the ivy with the point of her parasol, picking them up with an old pair of German-silver sugar tongs, and flinging them to me to crush? Or how could I forbid her giving a plant here or a flower there a teaspoonful of Nourisher? Neither could I complain about her filling a tin pepper-box with fine dry salt for the benefit of the slugs, and administering the same with deli-

cate impartiality in a dust-shower over their backs. I knew it would not last.

But, unfortunately, Del did not grow tired of my garden. The desire waxed; and she became so meddlesome and interfering, that I felt something must be done, and I reiterated the words, 'Something must be done,' one day when I returned from my office and found her busy tying up, with roffia grass, flowers which I preferred to see grow wild. There she was, with a necklace of the grass about her neck, and her scissors in her hand, tying and snipping away, what time Mrs Badger's two beautiful Persian cats sat on the wall this side, and Triggs' Sebright bantams sat on the wall on the other—all great enemies of mine, by the way—all watching intently the doings of one whom they evidently considered to be an intruder upon their domain.

I said nothing, but I thought a great deal; and after dinner, when I had had my modest half-bottle of Bulgarian claret, I made up my mind to open fire, and put a stop to what was a piece of feminine aggression not to be borne.

But I bore it. Poor little woman! she was so bright and chirpy and bird-like, that I had not the heart to speak.

'She has not many pleasures,' I said to myself; 'and these are the days of women's progress. Let me suffer and be strong.'

I rejoiced afterwards that I had not spoken, for the day of retribution was at hand.

It was about two months later, when I had become so wroth with keeping down my feelings and suffering in silence, that I had neglected my garden on the plea of being out of sorts, and had found that I had been really shouldered out of it. The young ducks had grown big and fat on the slugs, and the two Persian cats had been over a great deal, and had evidently had evening parties there, and invited neighbouring cats. Triggs' bantams had been examining the flower-beds, too, a great deal; but the most conspicuous feature of neglect was the dotting all over of the gravel walks with tiny patches of grass and weed; for it was long since I had made my back ache by picking them out by the help of a worn-down cheese-knife.

I remember this special evening so well, for as I was walking gloomily up and down the garden, smoking a long square Manila, given to me by my old friend the Major, Del joined me with a shawl over her head, took my arm, and hung there, prattling about how she had improved the garden lately; while I—there! I say it proudly, as being greatly to my credit—I did not say one wicked word aloud. What took place internally is my business, not the world's.

I smoked on in silence, and poor Del prattled, ending at last by announcing that now everything else was done, she intended to attack the weedy walks.

It was growing dark and damp by that time, and we went in; while, as Del went up-stairs to put away her shawl and tidy her hair, I threw the stump of my cigar into the fireplace and exclaimed in true melodramatic style, 'Haha!'

'Plee sir, Mr Triggs' maid's just left this note,' said our little attendant; and as soon as the gas was lit, I opened and read:

NEXT DOOR, *July 6th.*

DEAR SCRIBE—I peeped over the wall to-night at my ten ducks. They look prime. Green pear

are crying to be picked, so shell out. I shall send a man for them on Thursday night when they are roosting. Their 'lodging is on the cold ground'—Old song. Keep the fattest pair for yourself, with the compliments of yours truly. 'Dill, Dill, Dill, will you come and be killed?' 'Nother old song.—Yours most neighbourly, T. TRIGGS.

GEORGE SCRIBE, Esq.

P.S.—My compliments to your sister.

P.P.S.—I wish you'd buy my bantams. Their eggs are too small. We want size, so I am thinking of keeping Spaniards.

'Triggs is going to send for the ducks on Thursday evening, Del,' I said when my sister came down.

'Is he? Oh, I'm very glad, dear. Don't have any more nasty things about the garden. I mean to keep it very tidy now.'

'Why don't you say *my* garden?' I muttered sourly; but of course she did not hear.

That was Tuesday night.

The next night, when I came home, Del met me in the little hall. 'Oh, I'm so glad you've got back, dear,' she said tearfully; 'I do so hate to see things suffer.'

'Eh? What's the matter?'

'Those ducks, George; I can't make them out!'

'Not stolen?'

'Oh no, dear. This afternoon Mr Triggs sent in his man to catch a pair of them to kill and cook at once; for he said company was coming unexpectedly, and he hoped you'd excuse it; but master had given you warning.'

'Yes,' I said contemptuously; 'but surely, my dear Del, you are not going to make a fuss about two ducks being fetched away to be killed. He did not kill them here, did he?'

'Oh no, dear. I don't mean that, of course. I don't like things one has petted being killed. If one were so particular, one could eat hardly anything. What I meant was the other ducks. For Triggs' man had to hunt them about and drive them a good deal before he could catch the two fattest.'

'Triggs said I was to have the two fattest,' I said.

'Yes, dear; so he did; but the man said he wanted two good ones, and he caught them nearly all before he was satisfied and took the pair away; and he laughed and said that hunting things made them tender—a wretch!'

'Well, is that all?' I said growlingly, for I wanted my dinner.

'No, dear. I want you to come and look at them; they have been so strange ever since.'

'What do you mean?'

'Why, they've been walking round and round and trying to tuck their heads under their wings, and tumbling over on to their backs, and then paddling with their feet, as if they were swimming upside down.—Look, dear; they are doing it now.'

I looked out of the window, and there, sure enough, was one of the ducks on its back in the middle of the lawn going on in the most insane way. A few melancholy quacks came from the old dog-kennel, at the bottom of the garden, in which they roosted; but I thought no more

about the matter till I had dined, when I said suddenly: 'The poor ducks must have had an attack of vertigo consequent upon being hunted. They were too fat to run. You fed them too well, dear. Gave them Indian corn meal every night, didn't you?'

'Yes, dear; they were so fond of it.'

'Ah, well, we are to have a pair. Cook 'em on Friday. You won't mind eating them?'

'Oh no, dear; I think not,' she said hesitatingly; and that night, according to my regular custom, I went to bed little dreaming of what was in store.

Oh Adelgitha! Adelgitha!

But wait. I will command my feelings, for I did recover the control of my proper domain.

It was breakfast-time the next morning, and I was late, and had not finished shaving—I always shave my chin—when, raising my eyes, I saw distinctly Broadley's fox terrier leap upon our dog kennel, and then jump on to the wall with something in his mouth. The next moment he had leaped down and was gone.

'I'll put wire-netting up,' I said to myself; and naturally enough, I thought I ought to do so on Triggs' side, where I could see his silver-spangled Sebright bantams sitting in a row on the wall with their feathers up, as if it was cold, though the sun shone brightly.

I hurried down, and found my sister making the tea.

'Let me see,' I said, taking my seat and opening the paper. 'Don't let Triggs' man have those ducks before I come back this evening. We've fattened them, and I mean to have the next best pair.'

'Very well, dear,' said Del, shutting down the teapot lid with a sharp pat.

'How are they this morning?'

'I haven't been down the garden, dear.—Ah, that's right, Mary; put them before your master.'

'If you plee, sir,' said the maid breathlessly, 'Mrs Badger's compliments, and would you step in directly?'

'Eh?' I exclaimed. 'What for?'

'I don't know sir; only I'm afraid there's something wrong.'

'Bless my soul!' I exclaimed nervously, 'why has she sent for me? I can't go.'

'Plee sir, I don't know.'

'But you had better go, George, dear. It would be so unneighbourly not to go,' said my sister.

I felt it would be; and took my hat and went in to find Mrs Badger in an agony of tears, sobbing wildly as she sat on the floor of her little drawing-room with the stiffened bodies of her two Persian cats in her lap.

'Oh, Mr Scribe,' she sobbed—'oh, Mr Scribe, can't you save my poor darlings' lives?'

I looked at the cats with disgust, and shook my head. 'They are both dead, madam, and cold.'

'Yes, yes,' she sobbed wildly, 'so cold; and I've had hot bottles to them, and wrapped them in flannel; but it's all no good. Oh, my heart is broken! The wicked, wicked things.'

'Has somebody poisoned them?'

'No, no; it's the wicked foreign nature in them. They would steal, too, do all I would to feed them up and teach them better. I didn't know till two o'clock this morning, when I heard

them crying in the breakfast room, and then I came down, and Jane heard them, and came too. Oh, there was such a scene! Jane told me when last she had seen them—she had not liked to tell me before—she saw them each bring back one of your ducks and carry it into the wood-shed; and by the time she got down to try and save them, their heads were eaten off.

'Good heavens!' I exclaimed, for I felt that my fat pair had gone again.

'And it's a judgment on them!' sobbed the poor woman. 'I might have saved them if I had known; but it was not to be. Dead, dead, both of them; and oh, poor dears, poor dears, what gluttony! Of indigestion.'

I grunted.

'But tell me, Mr Scribe, you are so clever and so kind, what shall I do? My poor pets! What shall I do?'

'Well, madam,' I said, 'if I were you, I should have them stuffed?'

'Yes, of course,' she cried joyously; 'I knew you would advise me well. I will.'

I left her weeping, and hurried back to my breakfast; but I was not to eat it in peace. Before I had done, Major Broadley came round in a passion such as a fierce East Indian liverless officer knows how to pump up when thwarted. He insisted on seeing me directly, and shook his cane in my face.

'You scoundrel!' he roared—'you confounded civilian scoundrel! you have always been a nuisance to the neighbourhood.'

'Major Broadley!' I exclaimed.

'Oh, confound your indignation, sir!' he roared. 'You found fault with my dog, sir, for coming over into your wretched tea-garden place, where you have been a perfect pest with your ducks and bantams and Persian cats.'

'Major Broadley!' I exclaimed.

'Silence, sir! And so now, out of your malignant spite, you must lay your vile dead ducks in my dog's way and tempt him with them. The poor brute was in agony; but mark my words, sir—if that dog dies, I'll have the law of you, I will—I will! There!'

He struck the table with his cane, and bounced out of the house; while, as soon as I could gather my wits together, I rushed out into the garden, where the wind of my passage seemed to upset two of Triggs' bantams, which fell off the wall on to the path like balls of feathers, and did not move.

'What is the matter?' I cried as I ran on and passed a dead half-eaten quacker in a bed of zinnias; while in the dog kennel lay four more ducks—I think two were drakes, for they had curly tail feathers—dead.

I walked back into the house. 'Del,' I cried, 'the ducks must have been poisoned. Mrs Badger's cats, the Major's dog, have been eating them, and the bantams pecking them. They're all dying or dead. What can it mean?'

Adelgitha sank back in an easy-chair, looking white and scared.

'Do you know anything about it?—Speak, woman!' I roared.

'I—I—I don't—I think—I— Oh George, dear, do you think it was that stuff?'

'What stuff, woman?'

'That—that—that weed-destroyer.'

'Duck-destroyer, you mean. What did you give the poor things?'

'I—I did not give them anything.'

'But the ducks, the cats, the bantams—Hark!' I cried, as a horrible yell came from over the bottom wall; 'the dog is dead.'

'Oh George, could it have been?—'

'Speak! What have you done?'

For a few moments she could not speak; then, in faltering tones: 'I saw it advertised—Hypodemichemical acid—quarter of a pound to two gallons of hot water—to water the gravel paths—to kill the weeds.'

'But that could not kill the ducks!' I cried contemptuously.

'But it killed the worms, George; they came crawling up out of the sides by hundreds, and the ducks gobbled them up in the most dreadful way.'

'Adelgitha!' I exclaimed, 'I'm a ruined man.—Ah!' I yelled in the most awful tone as I dashed out of the back window, flew at and scrambled over the wall, and knocked down four dying bantams in my flight. For a horrid thought had struck me. Triggs had sent for two ducks the previous day, and he had visitors, and his family must be lying in the agonies of death.

I rushed into his house all unannounced. It was into an empty room. 'Too late!' I groaned, and ran down-stairs to the breakfast-room, where the whole family were assembled, and a servant stood with her back to me.

She turned round with a dish in her hand.

'Saved! saved!' I yelled, and snatched a pair of freshly-trussed ducks from the dish and fled, pursued by Triggs, who caught me as I was going over the wall.

'I say, old man,' he cried, 'are you mad?'

'Not quite,' I panted. 'Then you did not eat these last night?'

'Don't seem as if we're to eat 'em to-night,' he cried. 'Comp'ny didn't come. You can have 'em. The others'll do for me.'

'Poisoned!' I cried—'poisoned!' And as soon as I could get my breath, I explained all—to the Major too, for his dog was dead.

Adelgitha keeps to her conservatory now.

DETECTIVES AS THEY ARE.

By an Inspector.

THE lynx-eyed Detective of fiction has had more than his share of notoriety; his confrère in real life has never been able to lay claim to fame as lasting, for he is neither so clever nor so dull. He is not so clever, because he has to battle against the stern realities of a commonplace existence, that leave him no option but to grapple with them as they come; the difficulties which he has to overcome must be met with stern logical reasoning, and, however highly trained he may be, he is liable to fail whilst instinct plays no part in his life. He is not so dull; for whereas his very dullness in fiction is essential to delay the unravelling of the crime, and hold in suspense the ever-increasing interest and mystification of the reader, in real life it would be fatal to him, and put an effectual stop to his career.

The lynx-eyed detective and his want of ubiquity are venerable subjects now, and though

the Press as a matter of principle *must* grumble sometimes, it cannot be denied that it can be, and in many instances is, of very great value to the police. The British public is not easily pleased. John Bull pays high rates and taxes, and thinks the police ought by this time to have reached a state of efficiency bordering upon perfection; that is perhaps why, it being his national privilege to grumble and 'write to the papers,' he does occasionally rush into print when a crime is committed, and days lapse into weeks before the offender is caught and made to pay the penalty of his deed.

But when the criminal is apprehended and brought to the bar of justice, the Press, for the edification of the masses, records in full the evidence of the witnesses, the oratorical triumphs of Messrs So and So for the prosecution and the defence, and the summing up of the learned judge. Two or three lines only are devoted to the evidence of the detective who arrested the prisoner; the case ends, and all is forgotten.

There is in all this one point which the public in nine cases out of ten misses altogether—namely that the apparently insignificant evidence of the police officer is often that upon which the successful issue of the case depends. He may have spent days and nights over it, and without his untiring efforts the prisoner might never have been convicted. This applies more especially to cases of assault and robbery, and offences which are usually perpetrated in a low and disreputable neighbourhood; for these are cases in which evidence is most difficult to obtain, owing to the fact that witnesses know full well that to testify against prisoners of this class is a proceeding not unfrequently attended with positive danger to themselves. As a rule, people have but a lazy idea of the difficulties and obstacles that beset a detective's path. There are those whose childlike faith in his infallibility is only equalled by their absolute inability to assist him in any shape or form; and those whose unbelief in his capabilities is second only to the celerity with which they flee to him when they want his help and advice.

A detective's duties are necessarily multitudinous, and, as such, demand the display of tact, energy, and perseverance. The fact that a police officer must possess tact and judgment, and that a simple act on his part may be construed into a question of unwarrantable interference, is at once made apparent when it is stated that it has been held in a court of law to be sufficient cause for an action for false imprisonment if a detective stops a man in the street and asks to be shown the contents of his bag, because by so doing the officer has, though for a single instant only, arrested the man's progress through the streets, and thereby deprived him of his liberty. It may here be stated *en passant* that on the Continent, and notably in Germany, the police are not either collectively or individually liable to any action for false imprisonment.

It may, of course, be urged that to allow the police to arrest any one upon the barest suspicion is to put in their hands a power likely to sap the very foundations of an institution so dear to English hearts—the liberty of the subject; but it must be remembered that on the Continent there is no such thing as the liberty of the

subject, and that an explanation may be found in the framing of their laws, which presume a prisoner guilty until he proves himself innocent. English detectives have therefore to display equal smartness under less favourable circumstances; and the law which in England shuts a prisoner's mouth, allows the police magistrate abroad to question the accused as to the crime with which he is charged. If the unfortunate man 'changes colour,' and, terrified by the (perhaps) unfounded accusation, becomes confused and unable to remember what he did on a certain day, it tells against him, and he may be kept under lock and key for an indefinite period. The promotion of a French *juge d'instruction* depending to a great extent upon the ability with which he conducts a criminal investigation, and the speed with which he brings home to the prisoner the accusation brought against him, it is conceivable that in the hands of an unscrupulous man the knowledge of this might lead to considerable abuse.

A detective as a rule sees but the shady side of life. Its quarrels, its jealousies, its great passions, and its crimes are more or less familiar phases in his career. A magistrate sitting in his court has no doubt great chances of obtaining a clear insight into the mysteries of the human heart; but in his court a certain amount of decorum and quietness always prevails; it may therefore be said that to no man is a finer opportunity given to form a true judgment of the weaknesses of human nature than to the inspector in charge of the detective department of a large city. Prisoners and witnesses alike are brought to his office, where he investigates the cases. The writer has seen them in their different moods, from the calm bearing of the man of good position accused of forgery, to the insolent devil-may-care attitude of the pickpocket; from the sullen, defiant scowl of the wife-beater to the abject terror of the murderer.

Tales of woe and misery are poured into his ear, tales of sin and crime in all their naked truth and shame, and there, unfettered by the restriction imposed upon them by the far-reaching influence of a court of law, the accusation is spoken, by some with warmth, by others with a passionate vindictive outburst of anger; while the prisoner defends or justifies himself with the subtle ingenuity of an old offender; sometimes, alas! with the hopelessness of despair.

REQUIEM.

Let her rest; the weary night
Never brought her dreams like this;
Let her sleep; the morning light
Shall not wake her from her bliss.
Glad was she to end the fight;
Death hath conquered with a kiss.

Tired eyes need watch no more;
Flagging feet, the race is run;
Hands that heavy burdens bore,
Set them down, the day is done;
Heart, be still—through anguish sore,
Everlasting peace is won.

MARY MACLEOD.

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ON THE ART OF LIVING.

To make our lives pass with tolerable ease—to set ourselves an object, or to have that object set before us by others, and to strain every nerve to accomplish it—to follow virtue that we may gain happiness—to strive after wisdom, riches, fame, and knowledge, that we may be respected, or admired, or envied—thus to fret our little hour upon the stage of existence is the lot of man; and the scene shifts so quickly that our course of life may be ended before we think we have gone half way. Do as we may, there is no getting through life without crosses—either our own, or the crosses that others unthinkingly lay upon us—or the crosses we shift on to our own shoulders to ease a comrade, for a while, in the hot and dusty strife, in which the survival is not always to the fittest, any more than the race is always to the swift or the battle to the strong.

Some there are who, knowing that fighting is their part in life, sing triumphantly as they play it; courageous, undaunted, pretty sure to rise from the ranks, unless their career is cut short by a random bullet. Others, maddened at the sights and sounds around them, hurry from the press, and, as there is no discharge in this battle, make a violent ending for themselves, crying 'Adsum' before the muster-roll is called. But necessity teaches patience as well as invention, and a scene which to an outsider seems productive only of misery, is found on a nearer view to be capable, if not of producing, at least of being co-existent with happiness. For instance, a room filled with the din of no fewer than fifteen steam-looms all at work, even though those are engaged in the fabrication of the most exquisite silken tapestries, of varied patterns and brilliant colours, hardly seems a place for happiness. The noise, the close atmosphere, the persistent toil hour after hour, week after week, year by year, that pale the visages of the workers or dimmed their eyes, left them a not inconsiderable amount of honest pride in the fact that no one could get work at this mill whose characters were not

excellent; so that they had a good solid foundation of self-respect to support them.

In another room—a room full of girls, mistily visible through a mote-filled atmosphere, working at the first stage of rope and cable making in an Imperial dockyard, we found, we must confess, more difficulty in reconciling the possibility of their mode of life being compatible with any degree of well-being. Although they laughed and joked roughly amongst themselves, and we were thankful they could laugh in such an atmosphere, it was piteous laughter, especially when our conductor told us, on our remarking on their youthfulness: 'Oh, no old folks could stand it, nor middle-aged even; nor these won't either, not for long.'

But why flesh and blood should be so cheap and ventilation so dear, is not what we are now considering. While we were examining the wonderful productions of those fifteen steam looms our thoughts wandered involuntarily to those who, by 'turning an easy wheel,' set those looms in motion. The users of silken damask and rich tapestry, are they in any likelihood happier than the makers? It is true that poor Peggy hawking roses about the street may get to hate the scent of roses; but we believe it to be no less true that these same gorgeously-coloured hangings and flowered tapestries and rose-strewn brocades may become as hateful to the users, from association of them with ideas of weariness and disgust at the ennui of life, as ever real roses were to poor Peggy. For the makers have this one great undeniable advantage over the users of articles of luxury: they lead too busy a life to become the victims of hypochondria. Of the self-devouring egotism that comes at last to regard a convulsion of Nature as a portent directed against his Imperial self, the son of toil knows little or nothing. It is reserved for a Czar to grow melancholy with the conviction that his end is approaching, because a river that had overflowed its banks the year he was born repeated the overflow seven-and-forty years later. Pity there was not some homely Hotspur at hand to tell the Imperial

egotist that the waters of the Neva would have risen precisely to the same height at the self-same hour if 'his mother's cat had kittened' merely. Yet the probability is that had any one attempted to reason thus with the hypochondriac, his common-sense would have been kicked out of doors as treason. When once a man's fancy gets astride his reason, the first proselyte he makes is—himself; and when that is done, the difficulty is over.

Yet bad as are some of the effects of egotism, 'self-love,' says the greatest of all English teachers—'self-love is not so vile a sin as self-neglect.' Who that has ever watched the facile descent from one point of degradation to another of him who was once, possibly, a scholar and a gentleman, but who by self-neglect has reached the bottom of that fatal slope, can deny the truth of Shakespeare's assertion? Or who, recognising in the degraded, disreputable loafer of to-day—never too proud to hold out his hand to you for a tip 'for the sake of old times,' or to vilify you as soon as your back is turned—who, we say, recognising in this deboshed beggar the splendid, joyous lad of genius of twenty years ago, the pride of his school and college, the glory of his father's and mother's hearts, would not agree indeed that self-love is, after all, not so vile a sin as self-neglect, and that the root and foundation of the art of living is self-respect?

It has been said that there is somewhere in the harmony of human understandings a peculiar string, which in several individuals is in exactly the same tuning, so that, when this string is struck in their presence, the unanimity ensuing is perfectly wonderful. This may be so; indeed, the workings of enthusiasm, for instance, give us some cause to believe in the truth of the assertion. Yet it is scarcely necessary for an harmonic chord to be struck to bring about a certain amount of unanimity in human beings. It is so much easier to do as others do, think as they think—if possible—live as they live, dress as they dress, and—again, if possible—talk as they talk, than to take the trouble and pains to think or act or in anyway carve out the art of living for ourselves. Thus, many, as soon as a question or opinion is mooted in their presence, proceed, not to consider it on its merits or demerits, but refer it instantly in their own minds to the person in their circle of whom they stand most in awe—their own particular Mrs Grundy. And having settled what her opinion would be—that is, having settled their own opinion of what her opinion would be—they stick fast at the conclusion thus arrived at, with an immovable conviction that it is a counsel of perfection. Yet this going through life upon other folks' notions is something like a nation employing mercenaries to fight its battles, as if they had neither head nor hands of their own.

Far from such indolent complacency as this are those folks who, from a certain tincture of malice in their minds, are fond of furnishing every bright idea with its reverse. Opposition is the breath of their nostrils. In their presence, to say a thing is to have it gainsaid, not on

its merits, but purely from the innate contrariety of which their characters are composed. Why some are complacent and others contrary—some amiable and others the reverse, is only to be explained by the fact that it is their nature; just as it is in the nature of swans to sing, and pigs to yell, and foxes to be silent in the pangs of death. But, then, to human beings is given the privilege of modifying their natures. They may draw wisdom from books—if they be so minded; but then they must not treat them as some men do lords—learn their titles exactly, and then brag of their acquaintance. Nor must it be forgotten that action itself gives insight; while we hesitate and doubt we lose the power to do more than doubt and hesitate. Action alone can bring us to the stand-point whence we may perceive how to act wisely. We do not say successfully; the success of an idea, a thought, an invention, depends greatly on its being opportune—suited to time, place, and people. It is not so much the strong hand, so to speak, that gives the great turn, as the lucky adoption of a proper season that will launch successfully a new invention and give popularity to a novel idea. The unlucky Frenchman in Louis XIV.'s reign who pestered the head of the Marine Department with the preposterous idea that vessels could be propelled by steam, was promptly placed in an asylum, and left there to meditate on his own inopportune inventiveness.

In the drama of life the two prime motives appear to be love or hate. Yet hatred has been said to be but love denied. In the society of one who is heartily disliked there is a certain excitation of the faculties akin to pleasure. The mind is keenly roused and interested; it notes every word and look of the object of its animosity, pondering repartees, and eagerly embracing every opportunity of measuring swords with its, perhaps, unconscious adversary. (For the Dr Fells owe no small portion of their unpopularity to the fact of their self-satisfied obtuseness.) A mind thus stimulated insensibly enjoys the stirring of its faculties; its sense of its own vitality is intensified, and, so curiously are we compounded, that not only will love denied turn to hatred, but dislike will sometimes change to love. This consideration perhaps induced the Frenchman to declare that it was best to begin married life with a little aversion.

To bring ourselves into harmony with our environments is the secret of the art of living. We may have to reckon with an ill fortune which mars our best points, or a good fortune that shapes our rough-hewn ends for us—but whether fortune smiles or frowns, our part is still the same—to work steadily on, happy in this, if in nothing else, that it is the privilege of labour to make labour light. We must beware, too, of petting our inclinations; for they are like children, of whom the favourite is apt to become spoiled by indulgence, or else early removed—the latter the far lighter punishment. We are saved, says the Greek proverb, by making the future present to us—in other words, the man whose imagination is strong and his judgment sound, is not likely to compound for present ease by laying a foundation for future pains. The true ultimate end of the art of living, as well as of all ethics, is to bring us

peace—rest to our souls and bodies ; but it must be remembered that without exertion there can be no real rest, and that slothful ease or studied self-indulgence is not peace.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER II.—UNCLE HARRY.

VERY early next morning Mr Suffield himself opened his Hall door and inhaled the fresh morning air with a loud and satisfied 'Ah !' He left the Hall door open—to have all things belonging to him open was characteristic of the excellent man—and sauntered away through the park, with his hands in his pockets, whistling softly to himself, and cocking now and then a half-observant eye on the trees and the rooks, that cocked wholly observant eyes on him and cawed, but sat still, as if they also knew all about his openness and hospitality. He sauntered on, and still on, steadily, as if he had a fixed end in view, though he rambled a good deal from a straight line. 'Now, where the dickens has he put himself up?' he said aloud. He looked all around, surveying bit by bit every hollow and every clump of trees in his purview. At length something caught his eye a tolerable way off. 'Ah,' said he cheerfully—regardless of grammar—'that must be him.' He quickened his pace, and made directly for the object he had descried. As he neared it, he could make it out to be a kind of small tent pitched under a great beech. 'Hah !' he exclaimed to himself. 'That's how he does it.' When he got quite near, he tramped round to examine the disposition of the erection, grunting good-naturedly as he remarked each point, 'Hum ! Ha-ha !' He had noted that the ridge-pole of the tent was an almost bare arm of the beech which stuck out at right angles at about the height of a man ; that the tent itself was a piece of sailcloth stretched over the bare bough, and pegged to the ground at the interval of a yard or so ; and that one end was closed by a triangular flap of cloth, while the other was open, and had evidently had a small fire of dried twigs burning against it. He had noted these things, when he perceived that a corner of the flap was gently raised, showing a face and the shining barrel of a rifle.

'Holloa, Harry !' cried Suffield with a laugh. 'Hold hard ! And save your powder !'

There then came from the tent a chuckle of laughter, followed by a little, wiry-looking man in a complete suit of flannels. A rather remarkable and authoritative little man he seemed, with the dense hair of head and beard close-clipped, and gray and stiff as a badger's, and clear gray eyes keen as a needle. He said not a word, but yawned and stretched his arms.

'Going to have a pot-shot at me, were you?' said Suffield.

'I think,' said the little man, 'I was dreaming I was in the jungles I've come from ; and the tramping of your feet and your grunting—you were grunting, you know—made me think of an elephant, or some other wild creature.'

'That's all right, Harry. It's just the kind

o' thing you'd ha' said five-and-twenty years ago.—But what sort of sleep have you had ?'

'Capital. The sleep, George, of the natural man, constant, light, and refreshing.'

'Well, Harry,' said Suffield, 'I'd a deal rather you than me. I'm unnatural man enough to prefer a bed, and a four-poster in a good big room, with no draughts about. Of course, this sort of thing, the green grass, the open air, "Hail, smiling morn !" and all that, I daresay, suits you—it may suit you in fine weather, at least—but I'd have thought you'd had so much of it in your time, lad, that you'd appreciate the comfort of a regular bed in a proper bedroom. Howsoever, there you are, and here I am, and of course you're free to do as you like. I only heard late last night that you had taken up your traps and camped out. I didn't get home till very late, and the wife was in bed ; but she told me that you had found your bed too soft'—

'Abominably soft,' said the other : 'I wallowed in softness.'

'I daresay you did, lad : our beds are all the finest feather-beds, stuffed by the hands of my own blessed mother, and she didn't spare the feathers, I can tell you. Yes ; the wife said you had found the bed soft and the room stuffy, even w' th' windows wide open, and so you had just taken up your bed and walked.'

He paused in his talk to observe his brother-in-law, who had struck his tent, and was rolling it up.

'Ah,' said Suffield, 'you're pretty comfortable after all : a blanket, a carpet, and a pillow. But what about catching rheumatism, my lad ?'

'Underneath my carpet, you see'—he showed him—'is a mackintosh sheet.'

'Ah,' said the interested Suffield, taking up and handling the pillow, 'a kind o' india-rubber bladder, eh ? Good idea that, my lad : keeps your head cool.'

'Which, you will perhaps say, George, is not unnecessary.'

'Nay, nay, lad,' said George ; 'that's understood : no need to say it.'

'I'm proud of this pillow, though,' said the other, with a laugh. 'It not only keeps my brain cool, but it keeps my mouth cool too. It's just a pillow now ; but it can be a water-bottle on occasion, and many a time it has served me as that.'

'That's economical, lad, certainly,' said Suffield. 'And have you a double use for all your traps ?'

'For most of them,' answered the other. 'This little Persian carpet, now, I use also as a saddle-cloth.'

'Ah,' said Suffield, 'but your little tent—what about it ?'

'There, now,' said Harry, 'what other use do you think I put it to ?'

'Can't guess,' said Suffield ; 'unless you make your bearers or servants carry it over you like a canopy.'

'I make a sail of it,' said the other with a nod of pride. 'You know I carry with me on my journeys a boat in sections ; well, there I have a sail ready to rig up when I can.'

'Pon my word, Harry,' said Suffield, 'you're just the same ingenious young rascal as used to fry bacon and boil potatoes and make toffee in the same saucepan at school !'

'And, 'pon my word, George,' exclaimed Harry, 'you're just the same fat, talkative old rascal as used to sit by and criticise my cooking, and then help to eat it!'

At that they both laughed, while the tent-dweller finished packing away his traps. 'I suppose,' said he, 'I can leave them here?'

'Oh, to be sure,' said Suffield. 'There's to be a treat in the park to-day for my hands and the childer; but that don't matter: they'll interfere wi' nought. Set them again' the tree, lad—except your blanket; perhaps we'd best carry that in, in case it should rain.'

They sauntered away back towards the house together, Suffield taking his old school-fellow's arm, and insisting on carrying his blanket.

'And how,' asked the old school-fellow, 'do you get on with your work-people in these days of strikes and of Jack in general being as good as his master?'

'I've no trouble,' answered Suffield. 'I treat my people well, and they treat me well. I reckon them more than mere machines to keep my works going, and they reckon me a good master.'

'Ah,' said the other, 'you want to rule with sugar-sticks.'

'I don't want to rule at all, my lad,' said Suffield; 'but if I must rule, I'd rather do it wi' sugar-sticks than wi' cat-o'-nine-tails.'

'Ah, it won't do, George.'

'Well, Harry,' said Suffield, 'we won't discuss it: our point o' view's different. You've been used to black fellows: I've been used to Englishmen.—By the way, I came across your black servant last night. There's a deal of human nature in him for a black man. He had caught a rabbit, which, he said, he meant to curry for you.'

'I daresay. He *can* curry.'

'I rather like him: an amusing creature.'

'Oh,' said Harry, 'he can curry favour too.'

'Harry, my lad,' said Suffield, 'that's an old trick of yours—punning. You stick to your old habits.'

'About the only things old that I do stick to—except old friends, George.'

'That's as it should be, Harry.—But come now. Tell me about yourself. Have you done pretty well out there?—what wi' ruby mines and white elephants and all that sort o' game?'

'Oh yes, pretty well,' answered the other, shooting a keen glance at Suffield's face. The glance could not fail to assure him that there was nothing in the inquiry but kindly interest, and he repeated less sharply than before; 'Yes; oh yes, pretty well.'

'And you're come home now to settle down—I can't say in your own house—but in your own tent, I hope?'

'Perhaps, perhaps. I can't say yet.'

'Ah, now, Harry, I want to talk to you,' continued Suffield, 'about Isabel Raynor, your niece—and my niece, of course, too—your poor brother John's daughter. You've seen her, of course?'

'Oh yes; I've seen her.'

'And a handsome, clever girl she is,' said Suffield.

'Is she?' said Uncle Harry, as if he were little interested in the matter.

'Is she?' echoed Suffield. 'Why, lad, don't

you know a handsome woman when you see her, and a clever woman when you talk to her?'

'I'm no judge of women, George. They're not in my line.'

'I see what you would be at, Harry,' said Suffield seriously, after a meditative pause. 'But I had no idea you could keep that feeling up so long. "Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath," my lad; but many and many a sun have you let go down. It's not right, Harry; it's wicked, lad, and you'll rue it yet. Howsoever, you'll come right in the end, I reckon. I believe your heart's in the right place; and you'll like the girl if you give yourself the chance.'

'I noticed,' said Uncle Harry, 'that your son seems to have given himself a good chance in that way: he appears to like his cousin rather more than mere cousinship demands.'

'Yes,' said Suffield simply; 'George thinks a deal of Isabel, and is, I believe, fond of her. A man's best fortune, or his worst, is his wife. I have no doubt which Isabel would be, and I'd like George to have her. But somehow they don't seem to hit it off: she doesn't cotton to him.'

"Cotton," George, is a good word to use in the connection.'

'I know what you mean, Harry,' said Suffield. 'But this is not a time for joking. I tell you I think about Isabel a great deal. I don't like to know she's working hard at school-keeping, and living in lonely lodgings in London, when we've more than we know what to do with. It's not good for a woman any more than for a man to live alone. I've begged her till my mouth was dry wi' begging to come and stay with us; but, "no," she won't, thank me all the same. Now, if she'd only take on wi' George'—

"Cotton," corrected Uncle Harry with a mischievous smile.

—'and set up house wi' him,' continued the excellent Suffield, as if he had not heard the interruption, 'I should be happy about her.'

'Well, George,' said Uncle Harry, 'she ought to do a good deal for you: you've done a great deal for her; though I am prepared to admit that gratitude for kindness is the last return a man should expect.'

'Gratitude, my lad! I get more of it than I can do with from folk. But gratitude I neither require nor need from Isabel. I've done no more for her than I've done for th' rabbits in th' clough yonder. I've given them the chance of fending for themselves without going in terror of their lives; and that's all I ever did for Isabel. If she'd take to George—and he's not a bad lad at all—I'd take it, not as gratitude, but as a favour, as a kind of condescension on her part; for she's handsome and clever, as I said before, and as good a girl as can be.'

'But,' asked Uncle Harry, 'would your wife, my admirable sister, be satisfied? Hasn't she a greater ambition for her son than that?'

'Oh, you've noticed that already, have you? Yes, Joanna is chockfull of ambitions for all of us—for me, too, bless her!'

'Well, after all,' said the uncle, 'I don't myself approve of consins marrying.'

'Not if they're both perfectly healthy? Howsoever, Harry, that just brings me to my point: since it don't seem likely that Isabel will take to

George, don't you think you might—well, do your duty by her?"

"And what, George," asked the uncle quietly, "does a good man like you think my duty?"

"Well, it's hard to say; but forget what's past, my lad. Do something for the girl: ask her to keep house for you or summat?"

"I don't intend at present, George, to set up house, even if you turn me out."

"Turn you out! You've turned yourself out, and taken the key of the park."

"Well, then, my dear George," said Uncle Harry, stopping and laying his hand on his brother-in-law's arm, "we'll not discuss it any more at present. You're a good man, George; but give me a little time to find where I am.—Now, I'm going to have a dip in your stream. The water is pure enough, I suppose?"

"Pure enough to-day to drink if you like."

"By the way," said Uncle Harry, "why are the mills not started yet? It's past six a long while."

"Mills started! You forget it's Whitsuntide. We're idle for a week."

They were now on the brink of the glen, which was separated from the park by a low oak paling, with a convenient stile at the point where they had arrived. While Uncle Harry descended into the glen for his morning dip, Mr Suffield sat on the stile and meditated. His meditation took the form of reminiscence of his own and Harry Raynor's youth—a memorial excursion on which the few words they had exchanged about Isabel had set him off. "Poor old Harry!" he murmured, glancing after his brother-in-law. He gradually raised his eyes and let his mental vision travel over the glen and the clean and cosy village he had built; over the sombre hills beyond, which divided from the great county of Yorkshire, and across which now poured the morning sunlight, warm and golden; away still on over moor and dale, town and river, till the sea was reached. He recalled a certain holiday-time in his exuberant and energetic youth when he casually met on the glistening sands between the cliffs and the gentle summer sea his two old school-fellows, John and Harry Raynor, accompanied by their sister Joanna—tall and handsome, as Isabel now was—and by Joanna's school-friend, Mary Weatherly. How he remembered, as though it were yesterday, that his heart leaped when he set eyes on Joanna, and he exclaimed confidently to himself: "That's the girl that I shall marry!" He walked on with Joanna, on and on over the shining sands, and let the brothers Raynor have Mary Weatherly between them. Mary's position that day was symptomatic and suggestive of what was to follow: she was divided between the two brothers: she liked both, but she had to choose one, and she first chose Harry. But even then John—as he was in honour bound to do—did not cease to think of her. He still plied her with his attentions and importunities, and being in some ways—in manners and speech, especially—more attractive than Harry, he weaned the girl's perplexed affections from his brother. The sad and dishonourable end came when Harry was away accomplishing with herculean energy a task that was to expedite the time of his marriage; that was the season chosen by John to overcome the last scruples of his brother's

afflanced wife. He married her in haste and secrecy, and carried her off to London, where the pair had occasion to repent at leisure. Harry was wounded to the quick, and his life was diverted into a new channel. He went away to do business in India, whence his restlessness and recklessness had driven him to be a traveller of the old kind—explorer and merchant, that is, in one—in the little-known and dangerous States that lie between India and China. He had entered Tibet, when it was thought that death only would be the portion of any stranger who showed his face in that exclusive table-land; and he had almost penetrated the secret of the Lamas, and knew more about Esoteric Buddhism and its Mahatmas and Chelas than any other European. He had escaped from the hands and guards of a ruthless Khan of Chinese Tartary, and had crossed without mishap from Calcutta to Tonkin when Upper Burma and the Shan States were scarcely adventured upon. He had spent five-and-twenty years in that dangerous and unusual kind of life—years during which his brother John had disappeared from knowledge in the seething abyss of London—his wife having died, and his daughter being surrendered to the care of his sister, Mrs Suffield—years during which Suffield had become a wealthy manufacturer. Harry Raynor, too, had won wealth—wealth and fame—and now he had returned to his own people to end his days, if so be that his restless soul would permit him to be so much like other men.

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"You may hark back a long while," said Suffield, "before they'll speak."

"You don't seem to understand, George," said

'And, 'pon my word, George,' exclaimed Harry, 'you're just the same fat, talkative old rascal as used to sit by and criticise my cooking, and then help to eat it!'

At that they both laughed, while the tent-dweller finished packing away his traps. 'I suppose,' said he, 'I can leave them here?'

'Oh, to be sure,' said Suffield. 'There's to be a treat in the park to-day for my hands and the childer; but that don't matter: they'll interfere wi' nought. Set them again' the tree, lad—except your blanket; perhaps we'd best carry that in, in case it should rain.'

They sauntered away back towards the house together, Suffield taking his old school-fellow's arm, and insisting on carrying his blanket.

'And how,' asked the old school-fellow, 'do you get on with your work-people in these days of strikes and of Jack in general being as good as his master?'

'I've no trouble,' answered Suffield. 'I treat my people well, and they treat me well. I reckon them more than mere machines to keep my works going, and they reckon me a good master.'

'Ah,' said the other, 'you want to rule with sugar-sticks.'

'I don't want to rule at all, my lad,' said Suffield; 'but if I must rule, I'd rather do it wi' sugar-sticks than wi' cat-o'-nine-tails.'

'Ah, it won't do, George.'

'Well, Harry,' said Suffield, 'we won't discuss it: our point o' view's different. You've been used to black fellows: I've been used to Englishmen.—By the way, I came across your black servant last night. There's a deal of human nature in him for a black man. He had caught a rabbit, which, he said, he meant to curry for you.'

'I daresay. He *can* curry.'

'I rather like him: an amusing creature.'

'Oh,' said Harry, 'he can curry favour too.'

'Harry, my lad,' said Suffield, 'that's an old trick of yours—punning. You stick to your old habits.'

'About the only things old that I do stick to—except old friends, George.'

'That's as it should be, Harry.—But come now. Tell me about yourself. Have you done pretty well out there?—what wi' ruby mines and white elephants and all that sort o' game?'

'Oh yes, pretty well,' answered the other, shooting a keen glance at Suffield's face. The glance could not fail to assure him that there was nothing in the inquiry but kindly interest, and he repeated less sharply than before; 'Yes; oh yes, pretty well.'

'And you're come home now to settle down—I can't say in your own house—but in your own tent, I hope?'

'Perhaps, perhaps. I can't say yet.'

'Ah, now, Harry, I want to talk to you,' continued Suffield, 'about Isabel Raynor, your niece—and my niece, of course, too—your poor brother John's daughter. You've seen her, of course?'

'Oh yes; I've seen her.'

'And a handsome, clever girl she is,' said Suffield.

'Is she?' said Uncle Harry, as if he were little interested in the matter.

'Is she?' echoed Suffield. 'Why, lad, don't

you know a handsome woman when you see her, and a clever woman when you talk to her?'

'I'm no judge of women, George. They're not in my line.'

'I see what you would be at, Harry,' said Suffield seriously, after a meditative pause. 'But I had no idea you could keep that feeling up so long. "Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath," my lad; but many and many a sun have you let go down. It's not right, Harry; it's wicked, lad, and you'll rue it yet. Howsoever, you'll come right in the end, I reckon. I believe your heart's in the right place; and you'll like the girl if you give yourself the chance.'

'I noticed,' said Uncle Harry, 'that your son seems to have given himself a good chance in that way: he appears to like his cousin rather more than mere cousinship demands.'

'Yes,' said Suffield simply; 'George thinks a deal of Isabel, and is, I believe, fond of her. A man's best fortune, or his worst, is his wife. I have no doubt which Isabel would be, and I'd like George to have her. But somehow they don't seem to hit it off: she doesn't cotton to him.'

"Cotton," George, is a good word to use in the connection.'

'I know what you mean, Harry,' said Suffield. 'But this is not a time for joking. I tell you I think about Isabel a great deal. I don't like to know she's working hard at school-keeping, and living in lonely lodgings in London, when we've more than we know what to do with. It's not good for a woman any more than for a man to live alone. I've begged her till my mouth was dry wi' begging to come and stay with us; but, "no," she won't, thank me all the same. Now, if she'd only take on wi' George'—

"Cotton," corrected Uncle Harry with a mischievous smile.

—'and set up house wi' him,' continued the excellent Suffield, as if he had not heard the interruption, 'I should be happy about her.'

'Well, George,' said Uncle Harry, 'she ought to do a good deal for you: you've done a great deal for her; though I am prepared to admit that gratitude for kindness is the last return a man should expect.'

'Gratitude, my lad! I get more of it than I can do with from folk. But gratitude I neither require nor need from Isabel. I've done no more for her than I've done for th' rabbits in th' clough yonder. I've given them the chance of fending for themselves without going in terror of their lives; and that's all I ever did for Isabel. If she'd take to George—and he's not a bad lad at all—I'd take it, not as gratitude, but as a favour, as a kind of condescension on her part; for she's handsome and clever, as I said before, and as good a girl as can be.'

'But,' asked Uncle Harry, 'would your wife, my admirable sister, be satisfied? Hasn't she a greater ambition for her son than that?'

'Oh, you've noticed that already, have you? Yes, Joanna is chockfull of ambitions for all of us—for me, too, bless her!'

'Well, after all,' said the uncle, 'I don't myself approve of cousins marrying.'

'Not if they're both perfectly healthy? Howsoever, Harry, that just brings me to my point: since it don't seem likely that Isabel will take to

George, don't you think you might—well, do your duty by her?

'And what, George,' asked the uncle quietly, 'does a good man like you think my duty?'

'Well, it's hard to say; but forget what's past, my lad. Do something for the girl: ask her to keep house for you or summat?'

'I don't intend at present, George, to set up house, even if you turn me out.'

'Turn you out! You've turned yourself out, and taken the key of the park.'

'Well, then, my dear George,' said Uncle Harry, stopping and laying his hand on his brother-in-law's arm, 'we'll not discuss it any more at present. You're a good man, George; but give me a little time to find where I am.—Now, I'm going to have a dip in your stream. The water is pure enough, I suppose?'

'Pure enough to-day to drink if you like.'

'By the way,' said Uncle Harry, 'why are the mills not started yet? It's past six a long while.'

'Mills started! You forget it's Whitsuntide. We're idle for a week.'

They were now on the brink of the glen, which was separated from the park by a low oak paling, with a convenient stile at the point where they had arrived. While Uncle Harry descended into the glen for his morning dip, Mr Suffield sat on the stile and meditated. His meditation took the form of reminiscence of his own and Harry Raynor's youth—a memorial excursion on which the few words they had exchanged about Isabel had set him off. 'Poor old Harry!' he murmured, glancing after his brother-in-law. He gradually raised his eyes and let his mental vision travel over the glen and the clean and cosy village he had built; over the sombre hills beyond, which divided from the great county of Yorkshire, and across which now poured the morning sunlight, warm and golden; away still on over moor and dale, town and river, till the sea was reached. He recalled a certain holiday-time in his exuberant and energetic youth when he casually met on the glistening sands between the cliffs and the gentle summer sea his two old school-fellows, John and Harry Raynor, accompanied by their sister Joanna—tall and handsome, as Isabel now was—and by Joanna's school-friend, Mary Weatherly. How he remembered, as though it were yesterday, that his heart leaped when he set eyes on Joanna, and he exclaimed confidently to himself: 'That's the girl that I shall marry!' He walked on with Joanna, on and on over the shining sands, and let the brothers Raynor have Mary Weatherly between them. Mary's position that day was symptomatic and suggestive of what was to follow: she was divided between the two brothers: she liked both, but she had to choose one, and she first chose Harry. But even then John—as he was in honour bound to do—did not cease to think of her. He still plied her with his attentions and importunities, and being in some ways—in manners and speech, especially—more attractive than Harry, he weaned the girl's perplexed affections from his brother. The sad and dishonourable end came when Harry was away accomplishing with herculean energy a task that was to expedite the time of his marriage; that was the season chosen by John to overcome the last scruples of his brother's

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Uncle Harry. 'I mean this kind of thing: I, for instance, am very like, I believe, in appearance and disposition to my great-grandfather, who was as great a rover by sea as I have been by land. As for you, George, I believe you are like nobody but yourself; you are unique; you are, in your own way, the kind of man, like Shakespeare or Milton, that's born once in a thousand years for the admiration and delight of the world.'

'That's a high kind of pedestal you'd like me to mount, Harry,' said Suffield; 'but I'm not such a fool. Seems to me you want some solid food in you to keep you from flights of fancy. I must hurry breakfast up when we get in.'

Thomas answered his summons at the Hall door, and a matron of imperial presence met him on his entrance. She had the front of Juno, an eye kindly but shrewd, and a nose and chin that denoted such firmness of character as might have been suspected to be obstinacy, had the suspicion not been subdued by the soft curves of the mouth. This was Mrs Suffield.

'Goodness gracious, George!' she exclaimed when she saw him, 'look at your feet! Why didn't you put on your goloshes?'

'Oh, ah; yes,' he said, looking down at his boots; 'they are a little damp, Joan. But I'll take no harm.'

'Damp!' exclaimed his wife. 'They're sopping wet! You must take them off at once!'

'Well, now,' said Suffield, laughing, 'look at Harry's boots. Hadn't he better take his off too?'

'Oh, Harry,' said Harry's sister, presenting her cheek to be kissed, 'may do as he likes. A man that would rather sleep on the damp cold ground than in a dry warm bed, must take the responsibility of his own feet and of his own health in general.'

'There's for you, Harry!' exclaimed Suffield with a laugh of something like enjoyment. 'That's how I'm always ordered and disposed of! You'd better come and change your things.'

'Don't be long,' said Mrs Suffield. 'We are going to have breakfast early: we have a busy day before us.'

SOME MORE OLD LONDON CITY NAMES.

In a former paper (January 22, 1887) we dealt with the exceedingly interesting historical and antiquarian associations which are linked with some of the well-known street and other names of London City, and we purpose in this to pursue the subject a little further; for London is changing so rapidly, and the old landmarks are disappearing so quietly, that ere long very little but the name will remain of many a monument with which the present generation is familiar enough, but which it too often passes unheeding.

The main point of the previous paper was to prove by the evidence of mere names how important and magnificent an ecclesiastical centre old London was; we will begin this by showing by the same sort of evidence how eminently aristocratic a capital, as distinguished from a commercial capital, London has been until even a comparatively recent date. And by London, it should be understood we mean principally the

City proper, and from that circuit shall only stray occasionally. Strange as it may seem to the Londoner of to-day, the most aristocratic streets in old London were Upper Thames Street and Aldersgate Street, until the course of fashion, like the course of empire, took its way westward, and the 'quality' reared their palaces along the Strand of the Thames. Of the ancient houses of Upper Thames Street hardly a relic in the shape of a name remains; but Suffolk Lane commemorates the town residence of the Dukes of Suffolk; and to this day there may be seen, close to the lordly new pile of commercial chambers known as Suffolk House, a very perfectly preserved room of the old mansion, now used as a carpenter's shop, and some six feet below the level of the modern pavement, built of huge blocks of stone, and with a groined roof. In Aldersgate, however, one or two of the old houses actually remain, although, from a sentimental point of view, put to terribly base uses. These are Landerdale House and Shaftesbury House.

Close to Aldersgate is the grimy, unattractive region called Little Britain, and it is hard to realise, as we wander hereabouts, accompanied by the shades of Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, Prince Rupert, Dr Johnson, and a score of others whose names are famous in the scientific, literary, and dramatic annals of England, that here was the Palace set apart for the reception of the Princes of Brittany, just as Scotland Yard received the kings of Scotland, and the Savoy the Princes of that country. Warwick Lane, with its mural effigy of the great King-maker, marks the Warwick Palace. In Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, was the episcopal residence of the Bishops of that diocese; as was Ely Place the stately domain of the Bishops of Ely. In Great Winchester Street stood the Palace of the Winchester prelates; and in a still more incongruous locality, cheek by jowl with Bishopsgate Street, stood the residence of the Devonshire family, still commemorated in the name 'Devonshire Square.'

Whilst in aristocratic company, we may make a journey beyond the boundaries of the City proper, and point to the nomenclature of the Strand tributaries on the river side as a proof of the almost unequalled conservatism of London in matters pertaining to its old inhabitants. Here we have the Norfolk, Essex, Somerset, and Northumberland Palaces commemorated; whilst to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, five streets were given, each bearing as name one of the words of his title—even the little 'of' being represented until within the last twenty years by an alley.

But there was another aristocracy in London City even more powerful and often quite as wealthy as that which was linked with well-known titles—the aristocracy of those merchant princes who not only made London the commercial capital of the world, but who loved their City well enough to reside in its midst, to beautify it, to build its churches and to endow its charities. For substantial memorials of these fine old fellows we have but to enter the City churches; but our business in this paper is with the conservation of their names. Basinghall Street commemorates a Basing who was Lord Mayor so long back as the reign of Henry III. Lawrence Pountney Lane, Gresham Street—

formerly Ladd Lane—Coleman Street, Crosby Square, Finch Lane, Throgmorton Street, Hatton Garden, and others remind us to-day of the great Londoners of old. Here and there we find their old houses immortalised by a retention of the old name, but only one famous house now remains comparatively perfect—that of the Crosbys in Bishopsgate Street, used as a dining-place, for Sir Paul Pindar's mansion, lower down, was levelled last year, its fine old façade being removed to the South Kensington Museum. In the same street, however, as in Aldgate, in Hatton Garden, in Great St Helens, and in Austin Friars, there may yet be seen fine old citizen dwellings not yet robbed of their panelling, their carved balustrades, and their painted ceilings, although now utilised as offices and shops. Dashiwood House, Old Broad Street, remained until about twenty years back.

London was never, since the days of the Romans, an essentially military centre, yet in the name London Wall we are taken back to days, by no means remote, when the City gates were locked at a certain hour of the night, the draw-bridges raised, and the moat kept full of water. Strange to say, the only relics of London Wall now above ground are of the most ancient date—that is to say, of the second Roman city which sprang up over the ashes of the first little settlement, destroyed in that terrible campaign of Boadicea. We had the curiosity some time back to trace London Wall throughout its circuit. We were rewarded with seven glimpses of it. The first was the foundation of a bastion in St Martin's Court, Ludgate Hill, since destroyed, after an infinite amount of labour, which sufficiently testified to its magnificent construction. The next fragment was in the churchyard of St Botolph's, Aldersgate Street (still extant under the gardener's shed). Then came the fine old bastion in the burial-ground of St Giles's, Cripplegate; then the good piece with traces of Edwardian battlements in the churchyard of St Alphage, London Wall; then two fragments in cellars of houses in the Minories; and finally, the magnificent bit, twenty feet high and as many in length, close to the Tower, behind the original Tower Station of the Inner Circle Railway.

The name of Barbican recalls the usual outlying post which commanded the first approach to the fortified city of old days. Aldermanbury Postern speaks for itself; whilst Shoreditch and Houndsditch commemorate the old City moat.

Of the two great castles which shared with the Tower the command of the City—Baynard's Castle and Mountfichet, the name of the former alone exists. We dealt with sufficient minuteness in the previous paper on the street nomenclature of London, but one or two yet remain which carry us back to the earliest days of the City.

Standing in the narrow track of London Watling Street, it is hard for us to realise that the waves of vast change which have swept over London should have left this street unchanged in name, and, we imagine, very little in pronunciation, since it was laid down by the Roman legionaries eighteen centuries ago. Still harder is it to associate it with the Watling Street along which we have tramped over the wild fells of Northumberland, across the Carter, as far as the good old Scottish town of 'Jeddart,' or with that

narrow straight bit of road which runs under the shadow of the Shropshire Wrekin past the ruins of the 'White City' of Uriconium, or, in another direction, with that wind-swept track of Barham Downs between Canterbury and Dover.

Stoney Street in Southwark is the continuation of Watling Street, meeting the ancient *trajectus* or ferry from Dowgate, and retaining its ancient name with the slight omission of the final *y* as far in the country as between Billingshurst and Chichester in Sussex. Yet one more digression from London City. With regard to another road—probably more ancient than either Watling or Stoney Streets—the authorities have not dealt kindly, as is their wont. York Road, which runs past the King's Cross Station, was known until late in the present century by the name it had borne during uncounted centuries—Maiden Lane. This was the original packhorse route between London and the North; and as Maiden Lanes, Maiden Ways, and Maiden Castles abound throughout England, it is probable that the word meant 'made' in contradistinction to a natural track or a mere earthen fortification.

Closely associated with London streets are London inns. Of course, the heyday of the London inns has long since passed; yet it is a remarkable fact that hardly a single one of the famous old inns of the City has so utterly disappeared as not to leave even its name behind. We make this assertion after very careful investigation, after much comparison between old and modern maps, and much consultation of old road-books and guide-books. In a very few cases the inns themselves exist. In a larger number there are still hotels or taverns on the exact sites of the old inns. In a larger number still, the yards, modernised of course, exist; and in the largest number of cases the names of the inns still cling to passages, alleys, and courts.

The only two inns which, whilst retaining their old features of two centuries back, show no signs of decay or faded prosperity are the 'Old Bell' in Holborn and the 'George' in Borough High Street. In these, galleries and courtyards are still perfect as of yore, and from the annual coatings of paint on them, are evidently the objects of affectionate and reverential regard.

Close to the 'George' in the Borough is a nest of old inns, all retaining more or less their ancient features, but all showing more or less signs of approaching dissolution. The old 'White Hart,' famous to the present generation as being the place where Mr Pickwick discovered that sharp-set jewel Mr Samuel Weller, was pulled down two years ago. The old 'Queen's Head,' still retaining almost unchanged its original features, is in the last stage of decay. Past the 'George' come the 'Half Moon,' the 'Catharine Wheel,' and the 'Nag's Head'—old-fashioned enough, but bereft of their picturesque features. Lastly, the 'Tabard,' saddest spectacle of all, for it is but a gin palace of the most approved modern type. All the others are still inns, meaning by the word that they have a regular *clientèle* of customers, principally connected with the hop-trade, who eat and sleep in them; whilst their courtyards are still busy and animated as of yore, although with a different class of traffic, the mailcoach being supplanted by the carrier's cart, and the postchaise by the railway van.

Examination of the alleys and passages which abound in the Borough hereabouts show by the evidence of nomenclature that in the old days of the road almost every other house in this neighbourhood must have been an inn, or was in some way associated with the traffic of this great road to the Kentish coast.

Of modern taverns built on the sites of old inns and bearing the old names, the City of London is full, and the work of destruction has been carried on chiefly during the past twenty years. There are many men who may still call themselves young who can remember the old 'Green Dragon,' the 'Four Swans,' the 'One Swan,' and the 'Catharine Wheel' in Bishopsgate Street, the original 'Saracen's Head' on Snow Hill, the 'Belle Sauvage' on Ludgate Hill, the 'Flower Pot' in Gracechurch Street, the 'Maggie and Stump,' Newgate, and the famous 'Bricklayers' Arms' in the Borough, an inn at which probably more famous guests have alighted than at any other inn in the country, as a framed and glazed list in the bar testifies. Most of these retain their old names, and are still houses of public entertainment, the exceptions being the 'Flower Pot,' the 'Belle Sauvage,' and the 'Maggie and Stump,' the last-named being known as the 'Viaduct Tavern.'

Of the old inn-yards still retaining their original names, but either entirely modernised and used as thoroughfares, or used as depôts by carriers, the name is legion. The once famous 'Swan with Two Necks' and the 'Castle Inn' in Lud Lane, the 'Bolt in Tun,' Fleet Street, the 'Castle and Falcon,' Aldersgate, the 'Green Man,' are instances of the latter. Lombard Street, Bishopsgate, and Moorgate are full of the former. Generally, they even retain their old configuration—the narrow passage under an archway leading to a large open space, just as we may see in the old Borough inns. Sometimes they are but passages and alleys connecting one street with another, as is generally the case in Moorgate Street.

Perhaps in the latter instances we may be wrong to infer that every fanciful name, such as Mermaid Court, Little Bell Alley, or Crosskeys Passage, denotes the existence in old days of an inn on the site, for the name might have been derived from a neighbouring shop-sign at an age when every shop had its sign.

We cannot refrain from lingering a while amongst the inn names of old London, because these institutions were so typical of phases of London life which have disappeared for ever. All sorts and conditions of men patronised them, from my lord the ambassador, who would sleep a night at the 'Bricklayers' Arms' in order that he might appear in suitable attire at court the next day, to the highwayman for whom the road had been made too hot, and who would find in a Bishopsgate or Borough inn a safe retreat from public notice. They were the cradles of our drama; they were the centres of local animation and bustle; and their landlords were, as a rule, notable men. A collection of the various relics of old days still kept at some of the oldest inns, such as punch-bowls, black-jacks, curious glasses, coins, tokens, and snuff-boxes, would be vastly interesting; and it is as surprising as it is gratifying to find how much intelligent interest is

taken by the landlords of the present day in the histories and associations of the houses they own.

From the inns to the taverns is but a step; but of the old London taverns and coffee-houses which played so important a part in the social life of the past, even the names have for the most part been swept away. The fire of 1748 in Cornhill destroyed half-a-dozen famous places of assembly, the names of which are very frequently met with in the *Gentleman's Magazine* and other periodicals of the 'Club' period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and amongst them the 'Rainbow,' 'Garraway's,' 'Jonathan's,' and the 'Jerusalem.' The successors of 'Garraway's' and the 'Jerusalem' existed until within quite recent years; indeed, there is still a 'Jerusalem,' although it is no longer a place of public entertainment. The 'Jamaica,' however, still remains very much in its present guise of a chophouse as it was when a coffee-house; and in Pope's Head Alley—a name which commemorates the site of a famous tavern which flourished here from the days of Henry VI. to the end of the last century—there is an ideal little old-world chophouse known as 'Baker's.'

Of the famous Fleet Street taverns, one alone retains its ancient appearance—the 'Old Cheshire Cheese' in Wine Office Court; and the change into this dim, dusky, old place from the roar and bustle of 'Brain Street' is like a backward march of a hundred years. The famous old 'Cock' has gone, although the gilded bird still struts over the door of its successor on the other side of the street; so has the 'Devil,' whilst a new and ornate 'Mitre' occupies the site of the old coffee-house which shared with the 'Cheshire Cheese' and the 'Devil' the patronage of Johnson, Goldsmith, Reynolds, Garrick, and Burke. The sign of the 'Salutation' still appears in Newgate Street, but it hangs over a high-class modern restaurant. The old 'Chapter House Tavern' in St Paul's Churchyard was pulled down but a year or two ago; and we learn that the 'Johnson's Head Tavern,' hard by St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, is doomed.

So the old order of things giveth way to the new, and in the case of coffee-houses and taverns rarely leaves a memorial behind in the shape even of a name. Still, we are thankful that by the aid of modern London City names we are enabled to walk with so much exactitude in the steps of our forefathers, and that by their light we can read so many interesting and stirring pages in the history of old London.

ISABEL DYSART.*

CHAPTER II.

ISABEL ran up-stairs to her own room in the dark, leaving him to make his way to the cheerful dining-room, where Mrs Dysart sat wondering why her child should be so long of coming, and feeling a great relief when the sound of the opening door and Jenny's voice with its cry of, 'Eh, but you're late, Miss Isabell; and the Mistress waiting for her tea!' announced her return—though it was accompanied by the bass voice of Willie Torrence with its usual

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laugh and banter. 'She might have thought I was not caring to see that man to-night,' Mrs Dysart said to herself with a little indignation, feeling that Isabel made a very bad return for her warning in thus flaunting her lover at the first opportunity in her mother's face. But Isabel flew up-stairs with her face all smarting and glowing in the dark, and shut her door, and flung herself into a chair, half sobbing with the thump of her heart against her breast. She was angry and frightened and indignant, and yet full of awe, feeling as if some mysterious bond had been drawn between herself and Torrence by that kiss, which made her countenance flame with shame and horrified alarm. She had not, oh, not by a very long way! made up her mind that she would accept Torrence if he offered himself to her. She had not arrived at any such resolution as yet: but she felt as if he had bound her, secured her against her will, made a link between them which it would be deeper shame still to break, now that he had kissed her, a thing which nothing short of a troth-plight could justify. She held her hand upon the place, to hide it, even though it was dark and nobody could see; then, as she recovered her breath a little, sprang up again and bathed and bathed it to take away the stain. Isabel's little chamber occupied the opposite corner of the house to the drawing-room, with two greenish windows in two deep recesses, looking towards the sea, which was not visible, but only showed a clearness in the distance through the openings of the trees. She had no light but the faint glimmer from the evening skies and one little star, which shone through a pane, and was reflected in an old-fashioned long mirror upon the opposite wall. Though it was not nearly a century ago, Isabel had no means of making a light, such as are so familiar to us that we cannot realise what people did before they were invented. There were no matches in those days. She threw off her pelisse in the dark, not seeing, though she felt, how her cheek burned between the shame and the cold water, and how impossible it would ever be to rub out the spot which had been made upon it; and then very reluctantly smoothed her hair and took a clean handkerchief, smelling of lavender, from her drawers, and went down, still in the dark, pressing the fresh cambric upon the burning spot. When she went into the dining-room, her eyes dazzled by the light of the candles, and her hair still a little ruffled—for it was apt to curl by nature, and the water she had flung about her face had got upon it and aggravated this tendency—and found her mother calmly seated there and talking to Willie Torrence, who looked up at her as she came in, with perfect composure, yet a twinkle in his eye, from the side of the fire—Isabel felt as if she were the guilty person, keeping behind backs to hide her secret and terrified to catch her mother's eye.

'You are very late, Isabel,' Mrs Dysart said. 'I was beginning to think of sending out Jenny with the lantern; for that's a very dreary bit of the road by old Wallyford House, and I know you don't like to pass it in the dark.'

'It was just there I met Miss Bell,' said Torrence; 'so she was all safe. None of your ghosts will come near a doctor, nor yet a tramp—and they're the only dangers here.'

'There's no telling what the dangers are,' said Mrs Dysart dryly.—'Will you just ring the bell, my dear, and tell Jenny to bring ben the tea? Dr Torrence will take some with us: she can bring another cup: and the scones have been ready this half-hour past.—Bless me, bairn,' she cried, as Isabel came within the centre of the light, which proceeded from two candles, set in heavy tall silver candlesticks in the middle of the table, with a snuffer-tray between them, 'what is the matter with your cheek? It's as red as fire, and a spot upon it as if it had been stung.'

'It was the midges,' said Isabel, not daring to lift up her eyes.

'The midges. It's too cold for midges now. It's more like the sting of some stupefied bee, booming against you in the dark. Let me see it. You must get some of my goulard water to bathe the inflammation away.'

'It's nothing,' said Isabel, turning her back. 'It's just the cold water that did it. It's nothing—it's nothing! Oh, mother, if you would just let me be!'

Here happily came the interruption of Jenny bringing in, upon a large tray, the pile of hot scones wrapped in a napkin, the urn full of water just on the boil, the silver teapot and tea-caddy. The table was already laid with a glistening, snow-white tablecloth, and many crystal dishes of jams and preserves, and the cups and the saucers arranged at the opposite end of the table. Isabel was very glad to be busy, lighting the lamp under the urn, and preparing to 'mask' the tea. It gave her a little pause to compose herself beyond her mother's scrutiny, and the wicked glances which Willie Torrence, she knew, was casting upon her from the side of the fire. Meanwhile, the conversation that had been interrupted at her entrance was resumed.

'It's an awesome thing,' said Mrs Dysart, 'to think of the poor relics of humanity being made a traffic of, even if it were nothing worse. They tell me the light at Inveresk churchyard is to be seen all through the night, and the men sitting with their guns. It's a terrible thing for you doctors to encourage; and you might have known what it would lead to. Oh, but I cannot think, though you will probably scoff at me, that the doctors are not much to blame.'

'And how do you expect we are to cure you of all your ailments, if we do not know the structure of your bodies,' said Torrence, 'and how every bone and muscle lies?'

'Indeed, I have no expectations of the sort,' said Mrs Dysart with a heightened colour. This lady blushed to think that any man should know how her bones and muscles were put together. It was very indelicate, she thought, especially before a young thing, sitting there at the end of the table, whom this man professed to be in love with—if a doctor, thinking like that, could ever be in love!

'Well, I know you're no believer in doctors. You think it's a finer thing to cobble the soul than the body,' he said with his loud laugh.

'And that's scarcely a pretty speech to make to a lady,' said Mrs Dysart, offended; but she felt that to quarrel with a man, whom, after all, her daughter might marry, was not judicious—and she was grand at putting up with people

when it was necessary—witness Jeanie's man! 'Is there no other way that you can make your studies but that horrible way?' she said.

And he laughed again. 'Unless there were windows in the living subject that you could see through,' he said. 'I allow that might be a better way.'

'And so,' said Mrs Dysart severely, 'you throw the doors open to murder—that you may find out the secrets of your awful, awful trade.'

'Come, come,' he said; 'after all, not to say yourself, for you're bigoted, but Miss Bell now, if she were ill—you would soon send man and horse, by day or night, to get old Bogle maybe out of his comfortable bed, to see what was wrong and put it right.'

'Old Bogle, as you call him—he's just a very respectable man of my own age—has more experience than your whole College of Physicians put together. But it's no out of the grave he gets it, nor yet from murdered men,' said Mrs Dysart solemnly. She was full of the prejudices of her time, carried to a height of fanaticism by the occurrences with which at that moment every echo rang.

'Well, he's not much of a man, I know,' said Torrence; 'but I've every reason to believe he went through his classes like the rest. Don't take away an honest man's character, Mrs Dysart: though he's old-fashioned, I'm well aware—and I, for one, would not trust Miss Bell's life, if there was a question of that, in his hands.'

At this the mother, suddenly seeing a vision of Isabel, her youngest, the only one remaining that was wholly hers, in the charge of an untrustworthy doctor—who was an old wife, as she knew in her secret heart—and perhaps swimming for her life with no better succour at hand, gasped and was silent, not knowing what other word to say.

At this, Isabel's voice suddenly rose from the other end of the table, where she sat shielded by the urn and teapot, the hot spot in her cheek gradually cooling down. 'Uncle John says that the doctors must have known these poor folk came by their death in no just way.'

'Eh, what's this?' cried Mrs Dysart. 'Uncle John!' she repeated with an intonation which was not quite respectful. She did not think her brother-in-law was a Solomon. 'It is just like him,' she said indignantly. 'I am no great lover of doctors, as you all know; but to think of a set of men, with an education and all the advantages, conniving at a crime! No, no; you'll not tell me that.'

'I'm glad you do us justice so far,' said the young doctor. But he was a little subdued in tone. 'It is just one of the things that the vulgar are sure to say.'

Isabel recovered her spirit in the face of opposition, a wholesome and natural effect. 'I don't know who you call the vulgar,' she cried, 'but I think it was quite reasonable what Uncle John said. All your learning is to make you see in a moment what has happened. When I tell Dr Bogle, whom you think so little of, that I have a headache, he says: "Yes, it's from so-and-so, and so-and-so." And if you that are so much cleverer cannot tell when a poor person has been murdered, murdered! oh, that's not possible,' Isabel said.

'Miss Bell,' said Torrence, 'was so frightened with me appearing out of the shadows, she thought it was Burke himself, and was for off, like an arrow flying from me, till I came up with her, and—showed her it was me.'

Oh, to taunt her with it! to triumph over her on the strength of it—such a hateful, hateful insult! But Isabel's courage was taken from her, and she retreated, choking with anger and shame, behind the urn once more.

'But it is very reasonable what she says,' said her mother, reflecting. 'It's more reasonable than most things that come from John Dysart's muckle mouth.—Oh! I'm not blaming you, Willie, that had nothing to do with it; but a man that is at the top of the tree, and knows the human frame as—I know my stocking that I'm knitting: Lord help us! that's far the worst I've heard yet. It just makes the blood run cold in your veins; they must have known! How could they help but know, Willie Torrence, I ask you? Oh, man, man, what a dreadful thought! Them that are bred up and nourished and trained upon phiesic all their days! and get a grand character from it, and so much thought of—how could they help but know? When there's dreadful deeds done of that kind, a doctor's always called at the trial to tell what it's been; and will you tell me that they couldn't see it here?'

'Well, Mrs Dysart, if they were called to a trial and had their attention attracted to it, of course they would know.'

'Their attention attracted! to cold-blooded horrible murder!'

'How can I convince you,' said the young doctor, 'that unless your attention was called to it, that's not the thing you would remark? Science is a far grander affair than the way a man came by his death: that's just an accident: we must all die, and soon or syne it doesn't matter so much to the world. But knowledge is most excellent—the very song says that. And how can we tell what's to be done for our patients if we don't study and study every nerve and every line? It becomes just a passion with some men—the chief, for instance, who is one of the greatest surgeons that ever lived. There's nothing in the world so beautiful to him or so engrossing, or such a grand pursuit, as anatomy. And when you're watching him and hearing him speak, and seeing him trace out, let us say the— But no; I need not put names to the things to you, for you would not understand, and you would perhaps be horrified; but it's better than any play upon the stage, it's grander than any exhibition—you watch with your eyes louping in your head, and your ears tingling, and are just carried away!'

There was a little pause, for the young doctor spoke as an enthusiast, and enthusiasm has always the power of silencing the objections and impressing the minds of onlookers, especially if they are women. It was not till after an interval, recovering herself with a nod of her head in half-sympathy and admiration, that Mrs Dysart resumed.

'I am not saying but what that's true. There's a great power in a clever man's utterance, though it is a gruesome subject. And I'm not blaming you, that are maybe only a student,

Willie—though you are a passed doctor, are you not?"

'Oh ay, I'm a passed doctor,' he replied with a half-laugh.

'Well: but a student still, always a student, I suppose, in these terrible ways? for they say more is found out every day. But Willie, allowing for the Professor that might, as you say, be carried away by his subject, or the students that might have their heads turned, after him—my man, there must be some cool-headed reasonable person, say a colleague or an assistant or something, that would have his eyes open and would know. Will you tell me that there would be no one that would have his attention attracted, that could take a wonder where all these poor creatures came from, and would *know*? Oh, don't tell me that, Willie Torrence! for it would give me a poor, poor opinion of the doctors to whom we have to trust our lives!'

'I thought you could not have a poorer opinion of them than you have already,' he said with a subdued laugh.

'Oh laddie! but that's a different thing, a different thing altogether! giving a jibe at them for professing to know more than ever was intended by their Maker, that's one thing—but to think of them as conniving at a dreadful, dreadful crime!—And there must be somebody—somebody that's not an enthusiast, that would have his brain clear, an assistant, or a dresser, or whatever you call it?—'

'A dresser has only to do with patients—and is quite an inferior—and would not dare to have an opinion,' Torrence said with a flush of something like anger. 'The Professor's assistant would ill like to be put on that level.—But I must be going,' he added quickly, pushing back his chair as he rose. 'I've no right to be here at all, if I was not very weak-minded and subject to temptation. You'll excuse me if I run away. I have to catch the last coach into Edinburgh, or else walk, and it's a long trail six miles at this time of the night.'

'Dear me, you've but little time to catch the coach,' said Mrs Dysart.—'Isabel, go you and let him out at the front door. It saves a good bit of road.—Good-night, then, good-night—we'll finish our argument the next time you are here.'

Isabel went out very unwillingly, and yet not without a little tremor of anticipation, into the dark passage with her lover, between whom and herself she felt that such a bond existed as between her and no other man on earth, notwithstanding that every sentiment of her nature had been stirred up against him by his unwarrantable act. She was not surprised, though very angry, to feel his arm round her as she stood with her face to the door turning the stiff key and loosing the bolts. 'Bell,' he whispered in her ear behind her, 'I'm maybe going off to London, to London, do you hear? with a grand opening. Will you not give me your hand, and come with me, and be a lady all your life? I have a grand opening, better than I ever hoped: and I'll be Sir William, and you my lady, I give you my word for it, before all's done!'

'Mr Torrence,' said Isabel with great dignity, 'if you waste another moment, you'll lose the last coach.'

He laughed, as she opened the door quickly

into the clearness of the night, sheltering herself behind it, and compelling him to pass out: but then he lingered a moment and came back on the step. 'Think of it,' he said hurriedly; 'I'll come back for your answer.' Then leaning towards her: 'And give me another, my bonnie Bell, before I go away.'

It would be impossible to describe in words the fury, the passion, the desperation of displeasure with which Isabel dashed the door in his face. As she stood in the darkness, inside, trying to recover herself, she heard his laugh in the air as he hurried away. Another! as if she had been a consenting party! This insult was worse even than the first, and harder to bear.

SCENTS.

THE sweet and tempered sunshine of a warm September day descends upon the Romney Marsh. It is afternoon, and the shadows are long, and fall tenderly upon the great level that rolls away to eastward. The land is mellow with the richness of autumn, and above its wide and peaceful loneliness, a vast vault of blue is streaked with soft clouds, that grow purple toward the horizon. And there, beneath the purple clouds, is the sea, very blue beneath the blue sky, and bluer for the foreground that lies between us; the brown sails of many fishing-boats are burnished upon it, and the white ones of others are as the wings of gulls caught in a sudden streak of sunlight.

I stand upon the little village terrace on the top of the hill, and drink in dreams from the dreamy stretch of pasture-land beneath me, whereon even the red cattle and the hundreds of white sheep browse and crop sleepily. Beside me is the ivied crown of an old stone gateway that still pretends to guard the forsaken town as it used to guard it hundreds of years ago; through its massive arch I can see another old town rise—a dark pyramid out of the pale plain—some three miles away. But that, too, seems to be asleep—asleep, as the grim old gray fortress on the marsh that was yet alive enough once, in the days when the sea lapped its sides, and it was the port citadel of the flourishing town upon the cliff. It is a fit land for dreams.

In the apple orchard on the slope yonder the voices of children sound merrily. Their brown faces and rough heads bob up and down behind the blackberry hedge; their baskets are full, for they have been out all the morning blackberrying in the lanes upon the crest of the downs, on the breezy levels where blackthorn and bramble grow along the dykes, or the rough roadside.

One little fellow, with hair golden as the golden harvest-land, and eyes like blue veronicas in his sunburnt little face, scrambles down through the hedge in such a hurry that his basket's contents lie in a moment spread upon the green bank. The fists go up into the blue eyes at once and the pretty face is contorted. I cannot bear to see a child in trouble, and I am fain to try and comfort this sore distress. A bright penny brings a wondering satisfaction back to the mournful blue eyes, and we are soon the best of friends, gathering up the fallen fruit into the tiny basket, and plucking more from the top-

most boughs of the hedge, which Tommy is very pleased to have brought down to his level.

Evening descends upon the marsh. Tommy has gone home to tea, leaving with me a small trophy of blackberries, in token of friendship, and a tiny sprig of sweet jasmine plucked from his mother's cottage porch.

I wander down upon the marshland, warmer and richer than ever with reflections of the sunset that sends many hues upon the wide panorama of cloudland from its lump of fire in the west. Beside the quiet stream, curtained with tall rushes, home of the lapwing and moorhen, I lie down beneath a gnarled old thorn-tree that the wind has bent towards the east, and gaze into the downy breast of gray cloud above me, just warmed with the distant sun-setting. The voices of the children follow me still; but they smite upon my ear as from a far distance, and the scent of the blackberries, hot from the sun in which they have been ripening all day, seems to me somehow as the scent of a pinewood in the warmth of a southern summer. The gray marsh lies spread around me, and the white sails stud a faint blue sea beyond the yellow line where pasture and shingle meet, and the pale silhouette of Dungeness Foreland melts into the sky afar. But it is none of these things that I see—the voices yonder are voices from a shadowy past, and I am a child once more myself.

Seated on the rich moss of a forest glade, I watch a clear mountain stream ripple past me over gray lichened stones, and around boulders upon which the pink saponaria makes a carpet; blue gentian and frail soldanella grow in the moist mosses, and a sober canopy of dark pines spreads itself shelteringly over my head. I am a child, and a merry one; but I am a child-mother, a little mother to a large and motherless family of brothers and sisters—dear ones, all lost or scattered now—and whom I gladly see grouped once more about me as we play at twig-dolls in the Alpine woods. We have a huge family of them, ranging from two feet to two inches long, only two-pronged fir branches, stripped of their leaves; but they are father, mother, aunts, and cousins to us, and endowed with as marked characteristics as the families of our acquaintance. I laugh aloud, and as I laugh I hear the cattle-bells on the Alp above my head, and I remember that it is dinner-time, and jump up to lead my brood out across the bilberry and wild rhododendron to the hot sunlight of our cottage above the blue lake. For we are only up the mountains on a holiday, a needed holiday from the pleasant heat of our Italian home below. What good times we have had there, too, beside the blue Mediterranean, amid the chestnut woods that fringed the sides of the ravine, and beneath the stone pines on the crest above our white villa!

My hand strays to my bosom, where Tommy's spray of jasmine lies within my dress. Swiftly, in a wide and sudden flight, my spirit flies across seas, and I am on a broad English lawn, where a hammock swings beneath lofty elm-trees, a weeping willow dips into a pond full of water-lilies, a long broad walk is flanked with sun-flowers and holyhocks and the rich red roses of England. Somebody stands beside me, somebody puts a spray of jasmine into my hand, plucked from the creeper-clad veranda around the old

red brick house. I feel my cheek flush and my heart beat, and there are strange sounds in my head, and I sigh—a quick soft sigh. But that dream fades very quickly. Perhaps it was never anything but a dream—a short, sweet dream of a short, sweet English summer; the one English summer—and the one holiday—of my busy, happy youth. For somehow, ere the leaves turn russet and golden on the English beech and birchwoods, I am back again on the trellised terrace of our white Italian villa, where I am mother and sister in one; and the children are picking grapes in the vineyards and blackberries as big as mulberries in the hedgerows, and chestnuts in the amber glades, and there are no sounds at all but those laughing voices that have always echoed through my life. I listen to them gladly, thankful that no dream, however sweet, lured me from them while they called. I listen to them without surprise, so natural does it seem that they should be there. But slowly—slowly they change, and become less dreamy, more and more vibrating; and I know at last that they are the voices of the village children floating down to me from the apple orchard upon the slope, and that I am alone upon the wide Sussex marshland. The thin line of Dungeness Foreland passes once more into my sight, and the sails upon the greens and purples of the English Channel; and my heart grows a little cold as I see that the twilight is falling, and that the marsh is sombre—as I realise what it *might* be in the long winter when the sunlight and the summer have fled.

A little cold, but only for a moment. For if the sunlight is less gay than it used to be on the vine-trellised terrace beside the Mediterranean, or across the blue of the Alpine lake, the beautiful silence of the brine-brushed marshland, that is serene in its strength as a strong life at its close, fits best for me now; and if the voices that made music in the noonday are hushed, their echoes rise up still, and call me blessed, and I am not alone.

'Good-night, good-night!' shout the children on the slope.

And the best of my dream has not fled, though I crush the jasmine spray in my hand as I rise from the ground, and though I have forgotten the blackberries among the rushes.

THE SHAWMUT TRESTLE.

A WESTERN RAILROAD SKETCH.

By WILLIAM ATKINSON.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAP. I.

LLOYD FREEMAN, C.B., had just turned in for the night. Having turned in, he could not very well turn over; for his couch was not extensive in area, nor was it a bed of down by any means; briefly, it was a mere hammock swung from the rafters of a den about ten feet square. This den was one of three cramped apartments which comprised the entire 'barracks,' the other two being dining-room and office respectively. Upon the outer door of the barracks (for so had Lloyd Freeman, C.B., christened his headquarters) there was fastened, in striking contrast to its rude surroundings, a magnificent brass plate, upon

which, in artistic letters, had been hammered the legend :

'NORTHERN INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN RAILWAY.
OFFICE OF

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF CONSTRUCTION.'

In the lower left-hand corner of this brazen sign could be deciphered, in very much smaller lettering, the words 'John Smith, St Mary Axe, E.C.'—which showed conclusively that, like Lloyd Freeman, C.B., the brass plate was not a product of the Himalayas.

However, this story is not designed to treat of the Himalayas, nor of the N. I. & A. Railway, beyond intimating to the reader that Mr Freeman was at the period in question the designer, builder, and promoter of that stupendous piece of international engineering.

Lloyd Freeman, C.B., was at the head of his profession—or professions, for he combined civil engineering with splendid executive ability as a railroad manager—and was still on the youthful side of forty. Though an Englishman by birth, he was a citizen of the world at large; for had he not constructed railroads within the shadow of the pyramids, and through Canadian snows? When a lad, had he not carried a surveyor's rod and line through Russia? And, to float and build the Northern India and Afghanistan Railway, had he not resigned the chairmanship of the Melbourne and Western Australia Trunk Line?

His last undertaking he proposed making the greatest of all his works, both in its execution and its results. The latter even His Excellency the Viceroy could foresee, and glowing words of praise from Calcutta secured from Her Majesty's Government a 'C.B.' for Lloyd Freeman.

But the decoration was now a year old, and for the same space of time operations on the N. I. & A. Railway had been practically at a standstill.

The Ameer was not so friendly towards the enterprise as he had at first been; consequently the stockholders were slow to advance payments on their shares, and capitalists who were not already committed fought shy of Lloyd Freeman, C.B., and his 'colossal railroad folly,' as they now dubbed the Afghanistan project.

As a natural sequence the great engineer and manager was discouraged, and was in a quandary as to whether he should continue any longer with the company after the expiration of his two years' contract—an epoch which would arrive in less than a month. And yet Lloyd Freeman had many friends—men of influence and wealth—who believed him to be the greatest railroad man alive.

Freeman had just managed to forget his anxieties in a comfortable nap, when he was aroused by his servant, who re-lit the odorous oil-lamp and then handed his master a telegram. Usually telegrams received at night were laid aside till morning; but in this case the clerk, a trusted and well-paid young man, presumed upon his own judgment, and instructed the coolie to awaken his master at once. Freeman tore off the envelope, rubbed his eyes, and read as follows :

'NEW YORK,
May 10th, 1890.

'LLOYD FREEMAN,
Headquarters, N. I. & A. Railway,
British India,
Via London and Aden.

'Our new road, the Chicago and North Pacific, will be completed and ready to operate in three months. We are looking for a general manager. It is a rough new country, and there will be plenty of hard work. Will you take hold? If so, name your own figure for a five years' contract, and say when you can come.

JAY VANDERGILD.'

Now Jay Vandergild was the richest man in America, and controlled more miles of railroad than any other one man in the entire world. This offer, therefore, meant a great opening for even so successful and well-known an expert as Lloyd Freeman, C.B. The Superintendent of Construction was perfectly aware that he would have to drop his 'C.B.' in the democratic Republic: but 'C.B.s,' or even 'K.C.B.s,' counted for nothing alongside professional recognition, almost unlimited power, and a princely salary.

No. If he could honourably extricate himself from the N. I. & A. Railway enterprise, the C.B. might remain behind until he should again find himself within Her Britannic Majesty's dominions. So he dashed off the following telegram :

'THE EARL OF BOMBAY, K.S.I.,
Chairman, N. I. & A. Railway,
99 Old Broad Street, London.

'Two millions will be required at once to carry on one year's work. If not forthcoming, it will be useless for me to remain with the company.

LLOYD FREEMAN.'

In forty-eight hours a reply arrived :

'LLOYD FREEMAN, C.B.

'Money market tight. Suspend operations and report to the company in London. BOMBAY.'

Upon receipt of which Mr Freeman, with a light heart, penned the following :

'THE EARL OF BOMBAY, K.S.I.,
London.

'My contract with your company expires on the 31st. I shall not seek to renew it. Will report with books, papers, &c., by first steamer.

LLOYD FREEMAN.'

'JAY VANDERGILD,
New York.

'I will accept the position, and see you in New York not later than August 1st. We can arrange terms, &c., then. Thanks for the offer.

LLOYD FREEMAN.'

It was early in September when a special train pulled out of that great Western metropolis, Chicago, over the tracks of the new railroad, which was nearly completed. This train consisted of an ordinary coach and the private car of Mr Jay Vandergild, the railroad king and the financial backer and practical owner of the Chicago and North Pacific Railroad, drawn by a monster locomotive.

Within the boudoir car were Mr Vandergild and his private secretary, Mr Lloyd Freeman (without the C.B.), and a confidential telegraph

operator, all of whom were embarking upon an inspection trip over the new railroad, preparatory to opening it up to the public under the management of Mr Lloyd Freeman. As the Chicago and North Pacific was a trifling matter of two thousand four hundred miles in length, the members of the inspection party had a good week's work before them.

Nothing of particular interest occurred on this trip, except that they were joined at St Paul by Mr Medway Parker, the chief engineer. Mr Parker was a good-natured clever little Yankee, who, in addition to the professional information he was able to impart to Chairman Vandergild and his new chief, enlivened the trip by his queer stories and dry humour.

Freeman took a liking to little Parker from the first, and the chief engineer felt that he need have no fears about the decapitation of his own official head.

On the return trip, Freeman and Parker left the train at Medicine Hat, a point which had been selected as the headquarters of the Chicago and North Pacific Railroad, for the simple reason that it was exactly midway between the terminus on the Pacific coast and Chicago.

Here Freeman was introduced by Mr Vandergild to all the subordinate officials of the road, after which the millionaire bade his new general manager a formal farewell, purposely within the hearing of all the aforesaid subordinates.

'Mr Freeman, I take pleasure in turning over to you this valuable property for your best efforts. You will have entire and absolute control; and as long as you fulfil your part of our contract you will have the unqualified support of the Board in New York. Good-bye, Mr Freeman. Good-day, gentlemen.'

The great man shook hands with Freeman, and made a sweeping wave of his hand in token of adieu to the others. Then he stepped aboard his palatial car and left Lloyd Freeman, General Manager, in supreme control.

Now, to a railroad official fresh from a trim London office, and used to the superb management and prime condition of an English railroad, the headquarters of the Chicago and North Pacific at Medicine Hat would undoubtedly have appeared crude and depressing in the extreme.

There was nought in sight but the car-shops, the locomotive sheds, and two or three rows of shanties (each one a precise duplicate of its neighbour) occupied by the railroad men. Yes, there was the depot (pronounced *dee-po*), a long, low, wooden, two-storey building, the upper part of which provided offices for the general manager and other officials.

But Lloyd Freeman, having just arrived from the Afghan frontier of India, where his immediate surroundings were much more discouraging, and where he was five times the present distance from that great bugaboo of practical railroad men, 'the Board,' was not disposed to criticise the physical appearance of the little railroad settlement on the prairies, strangely christened Medicine Hat. He had seen the property, reviewed the country which the railroad was to serve, knew just what resources he had to draw upon, and knew, best of all, that to develop the business of the road, ways and means would be provided as promptly as he should call for them.

Freeman speedily became acquainted with such subordinates as he wished to retain, and quickly appointed others to supersede those whom he felt he could not implicitly trust. And not only so. He resolved, at the outset at least, to interview and know personally every engine-driver, fireman, conductor, brakeman, switchman, bridge-tender, and section-man on the entire railway. It was a big job, but by degrees the general manager got through it.

On the 1st of October the Chicago and North Pacific was to be thrown open to the public, and the event was to be celebrated by a trip over the road, in a magnificent train, of the Governors of all the States and Territories through which the C. & N. P. passed.

On the last day of September Lloyd Freeman sat in his private office, not quite satisfied with the arrangements for the opening. Labour was not so plentiful in the far North-west, and there had just been some heavy rains, which rendered it necessary to carefully watch all rivers, creeks, and bridges. The road was laid out, for working purposes, into four divisions—two east and two west of Medicine Hat—each under a competent superintendent. It was the division immediately west of headquarters which it was most difficult to properly man, and it was this division, too, through which flowed most of the normally small streams which became dangerous after heavy rains.

'Telegraph to every station to put out a sign for bridge-tenders at good wages,' said Freeman to his telegraph operator.

This was early in the morning. Late in the afternoon a clerk in the outer office brought the general manager a card, upon which the clerk had written the name of a caller. This was customary when, as was frequently the case, the caller knew nothing of reading or writing.

Freeman read the name on the card two or three times, but the best he could make of it was: 'Young-man-proud-of-his-horses.'

'What's this, Saunders?' he asked of the clerk. 'A joke or some crazy man?'

'Indian, sir,' said Saunders, with a grin.

'Oh, well, show him in; but leave the door open, Saunders, for that sort of cattle smell rather strong as a rule.'

In a moment the entrance was darkened by a gigantic figure which found it necessary to stoop to pass the doorway, and there stood before the general manager a red man in the prime of life, at least six feet six inches tall, magnificent in feathers, paint, and a gaudy blanket.

With arms folded and head erect, the Indian was solemn as a judge as he slowly explained the object of his call.

'Young—man—want—job.'

'Oh,' said Freeman, keenly eyeing his visitor. 'That's the way the wind blows, is it? Well, "young man," what sort of a job would you like?'

Freeman was inclined to treat the incident as a joke, but the Indian never flinched nor changed his attitude as he replied, connecting his words with difficulty.

'Young man watch—watch bridge—watch creek—young man—he know flood—when flood come—young man watch—young man—want—job.'

But Freeman shook his head.

'Look here, "young man;" I don't want to hurt your feelings, but when there's any watching to be done I prefer white men. If I'm not greatly mistaken, you and your people require a good deal of watching yourselves. No, I can't employ you.'

The Indian did not argue or whimper; he simply stalked out of the room as majestically as he had entered.

Down on the platform, however, he met Medway Parker, the chief engineer, who had on more than one occasion been able to make good use of Young-man-proud-of-his-horses. Parker had lived on the frontier among the Indians half his life, and knew the red man pretty well. He prided himself on the fact that he could distinguish a good honest Indian from deceitful trash. Parker knew better, too, than to waste his breath upon high-flown Indian names.

'Hello, Slops!' he said cheerily. 'You look down in the mouth. What's wrong?'

'Oh, well,' said Parker, after listening to the Indian's story, 'Mr Freeman don't understand. You come with me.' And the engineer trotted up to the general manager's office with 'Young-man' at his heels.

'Mr Freeman,' Medway Parker said, 'you have grievously disappointed a friend of mine.'

'Not intentionally, Parker,' replied the chief official, not noticing the Indian, who remained in the outer office.

'No, I judge not,' answered Parker, with a smile. 'You probably wouldn't think of me in connection with my old friend Slops!'

'Slops? Slops? I do not forget names, but'

'There again, sir, you would not connect the name of "Slops" with so patrician an Indian cognomen as "Young-man-proud-of-his-horses."'

'Oh!' exclaimed Freeman, as some light dawned upon him.

'Yes, sir; the fact is I have come up to put in a good word for Young-man, &c., whom we ordinarily call Slops. He's a pretty good fellow, Mr Freeman; trustworthy I have found him. I think you might trust him with a bridge.'

'And the fact is, Parker, that I have no use for Indians, Hindus, Afghans, Chinese, Maori, or any kindred trash when there's any trusty work to be done.'

'But, my dear sir'—

'No; listen, Parker. I have no wish to appear doubtful of your judgment, nor (as I told "Young-man-and-his-horses") do I want to hurt the feelings of the black man or the red man any more than those of the white man. But I have had sad experience. I put a Maori in a signal box in Australia, and he got two trains trying to pass each other on the same line of rails, with, I need hardly say, disastrous results. To humour a big Afghan landowner, I employed an Afghan as a pointsman, and the scoundrel got drunk and ditched a construction train. You must excuse me, Parker.'

'Pardon my persistence, sir,' said the engineer; 'but I happen to know that poor old Slops is trying hard to keep out of mischief and gain an honest livelihood. That's a good deal to say of an Indian. If'—

'No, Parker, no. Not now of all times. Later

on, something simpler may be found for your Indian friend—why, there he is in the next room. See here, Young-man!'

The Indian entered with the same firm step and erect head, the same stolid expression on his painted face.

'Mr Parker, here, has been recommending you. I cannot consistently employ you as a bridge-tender, but I'll not forget you if something opens that you can fill satisfactorily. In the meantime, Young-man, accept this as a proof that I am acting from no ill-will.'

Lloyd Freeman, who was good-hearted and generous clear to the core, tendered the Indian a five-dollar gold piece.

But Young-man-proud-of-his-horses shook his head and muttered, 'Young-man—earn wages—want job.' Then, as majestically as ever, he glided from the office.

This little episode soon got bruited among the railroad employees, who commended the general manager for his good sense in refusing to employ 'niggers and Injins when there's lots of honest, deserving white men.' But later on, when Lloyd Freeman turned his attention to these white employees with a view to securing better discipline, these same deprecators of 'niggers and Injins' forgot to speak so well of the chief official of the Chicago and North Pacific.

But Medway Parker, who hated to see a good Indian sent adrift, because he knew the last state of a red-skin who has once done civilised work and gets back to his old life is worse than the first, concocted a job on his own account for Slops. Parker gave him fifty dollars and told him to look up and buy for him a pair of Indian ponies, which Slops was to break in for driving in double harness for Parker's little nieces in the East. And, as *carte-blanche* in the matter of selecting and purchasing horses is the greatest compliment that one could well pay an Indian, Medway Parker won for himself the lifelong gratitude of Young-man-proud-of-his-horses.

KAFTA, AN ARABIAN BEVERAGE.

THERE are probably but few people who have ever heard of Kafta, and yet it is to a temporary scarcity of the plant producing this beverage that we owe the introduction of coffee. Kafta is much in repute amongst Arabians, especially in the vicinity of Yemen. It is obtained by boiling the leaves and stems of the plant known as *kât*. The botanical name of *kât* is *Catha edulis*. The first to describe it scientifically was the Swedish botanist Forskal, who, after travelling extensively in Arabia and Lower Egypt, died in the former country in July 1768. In honour of the discoverer, some of the early botanical authors have referred to the plant as *Catha forskalii*. It is a glabrous tree or shrub, belonging to the Spindle-tree family Celastraceæ, growing about ten feet in height, and having rusty-coloured leaves not unlike those of the strawberry tree. Although it is distributed in the interior of Eastern Africa from Abyssinia to Port Natal, it only seems to be cultivated in a systematic manner by the Arabians. These latter plant it in the same ground as their coffee.

According to a recent writer, the cultivation

seems to require some care. Propagation is effected by cuttings, which, once planted, are left for three years, care being taken to keep them manured and watered and the ground free from weeds. At the end of three years all the leaves are taken off; and during the next year the plant puts forth a young growth, which is collected and sold in bundles under the name of Kât Moubarreah. This is considered an inferior quality. The following year the branches put forth new leaves, and these are cut and sold under the name of Kât Methani. This production is more esteemed. The tree is then allowed to rest for three years, when cutting is again recommenced. Another writer tells us that Sabbare Kât, which is put up in bundles six inches wide, is considered superior to Muktaree Kât, which is put up in bundles about half the size. It would therefore seem that Moubarreah is synonymous with Muktaree, and Methani with Sabbare, so far as kât is concerned.

Kât seems to occupy a position in the social economy of the Arabians similar to that held by the kola nut among the West Africans, and Kavakava among the Fijians. Every visitor upon entering good houses is presented with twigs of kât, and the floors of the rooms must to European eyes present a somewhat disgusting appearance, for, after chewing the leaves, the visitor throws upon the floor not only the stalks, but also those parts of the leaves which he has not swallowed. Botta, who travelled in Arabia in 1837, tells us that he was presented by one of the sheiks of the country with a bundle of branches of kât, according to the rules of politeness of the people. He ascertained that the leaves when chewed had an agreeable exciting action, which imparted the desire to spend the night rather in quiet conversation than sleeping. He expressly states that he thought the kind of excitation and the lovely dreams provoked by the use of kât extremely pleasant. He gives an account of its virtues, which much resemble those of coca leaves; in fact, messengers in Arabia who have any hard journeys to undertake use kât much in the same way as the natives of the Cordilleras do the coca plant. So invigorating is kât, that it is said the Arab soldiers who chew the twigs are able to stand sentry all night long without feeling in the least drowsy.

When fresh, the green bundles are said to smell very agreeably; and the leaves are by some considered strongly inebriating; but the intoxication does not last for a long time. This latter statement, however, has not been allowed to go unchallenged. No true Mohammedan will partake of intoxicating liquors, the use of them being forbidden by the Koran. A synod of learned Mussulmans was therefore convened; and as a result of their investigation, decided that as kâta did not impair the health or impede the observance of religious duties, but only increased hilarity and good-humour, it was lawful to use it.

By some it is said to have been employed from time immemorial; but other writers contend that its use is not of very ancient date. It was undoubtedly used long before the Arabians indulged in coffee. The latter, a sixteenth-century writer tells us, was resorted to in Aden when, in the time of Dhabhânî, in the fifteenth century, kât had become a rare article. Curiously enough,

caffeine, the active principle of tea and coffee, and to which these beverages owe so large a portion of their exhilarating influence, is totally absent in the leaves of kât. They have been more than once analysed by eminent chemists; but none of them have been able to trace a vestige of this important alkaloid.

A regular commerce is carried on with the product, fresh branches being brought every morning from the mountains to the contiguous towns. The increasing business in it, especially in Aden, is phenomenal. Assistant-surgeon Vaughan, Port Surgeon at Aden in 1859, speaking of the great predilection that the Arabs have for kât, mentions that the quantity used in Aden alone averaged about two hundred and eighty camel-loads annually; and that the exclusive privilege of selling it, which is farmed by the Government, produced a revenue of fifteen hundred rupees per year; whilst in 1877, Captain Hunter stated that in the previous year twelve hundred camel-loads of kât found their way to Aden; and that eight thousand rupees were paid for the privilege of collecting duty on the commodity.

The leaves, beyond being chewed and boiled in water, are sometimes boiled in milk; and as the infusion is bitter, honey is added to it to render it more palatable.

For the purposes of commerce, the twigs are made up into closely-pressed bundles of different sizes, according to quality, the best kind being in bundles a foot or fifteen inches long, each bundle consisting of forty slender twigs tied together with strips of fibrous bark. The value of a bundle in Aden is said to be about threepence, whilst at Yemen the price is said to vary from sixpence to eightpence.

TURNING THE FLOWERS.

Out in the country, where two roads met,
A cottage with open door I found;
The board for the evening meal was set,
The good wife bustled busily round.
It was homely and plain—but oh, so sweet,
With rose and lavender freshly culled,
And there, in a cradle, just at my feet,
A beautiful babe to sleep lay lulled.

I sat me down, with a bidden right,
And a sense of comfort over me stole;
The board, though homely, was clean and white,
And flowers were upon it—set in a bowl.
And the good wife said unto me, her guest,
As she twisted the blooms in the bowl so brown:
'I like to turn what are freshest and best
To the side where the man of the house sits down.'

I looked at the flowers—so white, so red;
I gazed at the happy-faced busy wife,
And, 'That is a nice idea,' I said;
'I wish we could carry it all through life.
For the world would be a far happier place,
And many a glint through the darkness loom,
If we "turned the flowers" with a tactful grace,
And showed the glory instead of the gloom.'

NANNIE POWER-O'DONOGHUE.

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ENGLISH CHARACTER-WRITERS.

THE principle of evolution or development is as plainly discernible in literature as in other departments of human activity. New literary forms arise—the tree, as it were, puts forth fresh branches—but the principle of growth permeates the whole. Examples are not far to seek. The periodical essays of Addison and Steele, and of the host of followers and imitators who trod in their footsteps, added a new province to the world of letters; but the eighteenth-century essay, as it may distinctively be called, was a development of two previously existing forms of prose composition. Its beginning was a little uncertain and confused. The element of news, to which at first Steele gave prominence in the *Tatler*, was soon felt to be out of harmony with its surroundings, and was accordingly dropped. The two leading features of the essay proper, as found in the *Tatler*, omitting the earlier numbers, and in greater perfection in the *Spectator*, may be roughly described as moral reflection, and the portrayal of character and manners. The former is descended from the moral or Baconian essay of the seventeenth century; and the latter is the developed form of the Character-writing which was of old so popular a species of composition. The eighteenth-century essay by means of fiction and anecdote made this kind of portraiture piquant and personal. The 'Characters,' on the contrary, were general in their reference, and were written in a series of short, pointed sentences. The characteristics of classes were described under such generic titles as 'a drunkard,' 'a scold,' 'a good wife,' 'a publisher,' and so forth.

One of the earliest writers of Characters was Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich, the 'English Seneca,' who essayed successfully a variety of forms of prose and verse composition. His *Characters of Virtues and Vices* contain eleven of the former and fifteen of the latter. They are vigorously written, and show considerable

power in the description of human nature in its strength and weakness. The character of 'The Hypocrite' is thus unsparingly summed up: 'In brief, he is the stranger's saint, the neighbour's disease, the blot of goodness, a rotten stick in a dark night, the poppy in a cornfield, an ill-tempered candle with a great snuff that in going out smells ill; an angel abroad, a devil at home; and worse when an angel than when a devil.'

Bishop Hall's book was followed in 1614 by the *Characters, or Witty Descriptions of the Properties of Sundry Persons*, of Sir Thomas Overbury, the unfortunate victim of Somerset and Lady Essex. This book, a small quarto of less than a hundred pages, became at once highly popular, and rapidly went through a number of editions. It increased in bulk as it increased in favour, for to the original contents many additions were made by various anonymous writers. The book that in 1614 had only twenty-one characters, contained eight years later no fewer than eighty. Overbury was a graphic but somewhat vulgar writer. 'The Tinker,' 'A Courtier,' 'The Fair and Happy Milkmaid,' are some of his titles. In the first named occurs an early use of a phrase which gave rise a few years ago to a great deal of unnecessary discussion: 'So marches he [the Tinker] all over England with his *bag and baggage*; his conversation is irreproveable, for he is ever mending.' 'The Milkmaid,' although tainted by the conceited style—in the old sense of the phrase—that was then so much in vogue, is pleasantly written, with an occasional touch of poetical feeling. 'She rises,' we are told, 'with Chanticleer, her dame's cock, and at night makes the lamb her curfew; 'When winter evenings fall early, sitting at her merry wheel, she sings defiance to the giddy wheel of fortune; and lastly: 'Thus lives she, and all her care is, she may die in the spring-time, to have store of flowers stuck upon her winding-sheet.' The Courtier is described in a series of epigrammatic sentences: 'He knows no man that is not generally known; 'He follows nothing but incon-

stancy, admires nothing but beauty, honours nothing but fortune.'

Several books of Characters followed Overbury's work in rapid succession, including one by Nicholas Breton, the poet. But the next work of this kind of any importance was the *Microcosmography*, written by John Earle, Bishop of Salisbury, and published in 1628. In five years it went through six editions, and has been reprinted more than once during the present century. The contents are very varied, and the author is never dull. The manners of the time are vividly painted in a strain of good-humoured railery, not unmingled with satire, with many touches that show the writer to have been a very acute observer of the customs and doings of his contemporaries.

Among the Characters are 'A Young Raw Preacher,' 'A Self-conceited Man,' 'A Tavern,' 'An Old College Butler,' 'A Player,' 'A She Precise Hypocrite,' 'Paul's Walk,' 'An University Dun,' and many more. 'Paul's Walk' is a lively description of the busy scene then daily beheld within the walls of the old St Paul's Cathedral. The middle aisle was a recognised promenade and meeting-place. There, merchants transacted their business, courtiers and gallants exhibited their newest and bravest attire, gossip and scandal were circulated, servants were hired, and pick-pockets plied a profitable trade. 'The noise in it,' says Earle, 'is like that of bees, a strange humming or buzz mixed of walking tongues and feet: it is a kind of still roar or loud whisper. It is the great exchange of all discourse, and no business whatsoever but is here stirring and a-foot.' Even while divine service was being performed the promenaders continued their proceedings. The usual time for walking in St Paul's was an hour or so in the morning, and from three to six in the afternoon. As noon approached, the crowd of busy idlers melted away in search of dinner at their own homes or at the neighbouring ordinaries, until only the dinnerless were left, who paced out the interval in the aisles, and were said to have 'dined with Duke Humphrey,' in reference to the tomb of the 'good Duke Humphrey' of Gloucester, which was supposed to be in the cathedral.

The 'University Dun' will be recognised perhaps by some readers as a not unfamiliar figure. 'He is a gentleman's follower cheaply purchased, for his own money has hired him'; 'He is a great complainer of scholars' loitering, for he is sure never to find them within, and yet he is the chief cause many times that makes them study.' And in a similar vein the Bishop goes on to describe how some men choose their rooms on purpose to avoid the dun, and think that chamber the best that gives them the clearest view of his approach, that by shifting him off men learn to shift in the world, and that the only place to mollify him is the buttery, where he will run up his debtor a long score for liquor, for 'he is one much wrought with good beer and rhetoric.' The 'She Precise Hypocrite' is a bitter attack on the female Puritans, and, though rather coarse, is very amusing. The 'Tavern' and its frequenters are described with mild satire: 'If the vintner's nose

be at door, it is a sign sufficient; but the absence of this is supplied by the ivy bush.' The first Character in the book is that of 'a child.' 'His soul,' says Earle, 'is yet a white paper unscrawled with observations of the world, wherewith, at length, it becomes a blurred note-book.' This simile occurs in more than one of our old authors, and Shakespeare, in *King John*, speaking of a child, says:

The hand of time
Shall draw this brief into as huge a volume.

The *Microcosmography* was followed by many books of Characters by writers now altogether unknown or of little importance. Most of their contents show the same characteristics. The Characters are hit off in short sentences which try hard to be epigrammatic; some are not without humour, and many are often interesting for the light they throw on the manners and popular habits of the time. Of the books that were published within a few years of Bishop Earle's work, the best perhaps were the *Picture Loquentes*, by Wye Saltonstall, 1631; and *A Strange Metamorphosis of Man, transformed into a Wildnesse: Deciphered in Characters*, 1634, by a writer whose name is unknown. As the times became more troublous and party feeling ran high, many of the Characters published began to have reference to the political and ecclesiastical strifes that were agitating the country. In a little book of *Characters and Elegies* by Sir Francis Wortley, 1646, may be found the characters of 'His Royal Majesty,' 'An Antinomian, or Anabaptistical Independent,' 'A Jesuit,' and others of a similar kind. In *The Times Anatomised*, 1647, by T. Ford, are 'A Good King,' 'Rebellion,' 'Warre,' and others having obvious reference to current events.

Between 1647 and the end of the seventeenth century some thirty books of Characters were published; but few were of any importance, and enumeration would be tedious. The author of one of these books, Richard Flecknoe, has been made unenviably famous by Dryden's bitter satire. In the second volume of Samuel Butler's *Remains*, as published by Thyer in 1759, there are over a hundred Characters; and besides these, sixty-six additional characters are lost to the world among the yet unpublished *Remains* of the author of *Hudibras*. Among the latter is a character of a 'Stationer,' as publishers and booksellers were then called. It is written in the spirit of the famous saying, 'Now Barabbas was a publisher.' 'A Stationer,' says Butler, 'is one that lives by books, and understands nothing of them but the prices. . . . He abuses those most (like other cheats) that he gains most by, and like a disease destroys those that feed him; and in this strain of vilification the whole article is written.'

The writing of Characters practically died out with the close of the seventeenth century. The exhibition and discussion of the idiosyncrasies of individuals and of classes became a leading feature of the periodical essays, and as these went out of popular favour, there arose the English novel, in the modern sense of the term, and character became an important item in the stock-in-trade of the novelist. The student of modern manners, as exhibited in fiction, cannot complain

of lack of material; he may range from Fielding to Thackeray, and from Jane Austen to George Eliot, and this surely will give him 'ample room and verge enough.'

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER III.—THE BLACK TULIP AND THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

MEANWHILE, Isabel Raynor and her cousin Euphemia Suffield wandered in the sunny garden. If they were not 'in maiden meditation, fancy free,' as they walked along the gravelled paths with their arms about each other, they at least appeared to be. The flowers were late that year, and Whitsuntide was early. There was not a hint of rosebuds; but the garden was gay with the last of the blooms of spring, especially with beds of tulips, for which Suffield had the love of a Dutchman. Fragrant and beautiful, however, as were the flowers in the freshness of the morning, they seemed but sweet and illustrative notes and comments on the beauty of the two maidens that walked among them. A fanciful young poet who afterwards saw the young ladies together in other scenes called them the Black Tulip and the Lily of the Valley. Had he seen them together on that particular morning his floreate fancy would have appeared less forced; for, with the prodigal suggestions of the garden about them, Isabel, in her dark dress and with her rich dark beauty, indeed seemed the human embodiment, express and admirable, of the Black Tulip of Dumas' unfortunate and long-suffering hero—tall and straight, with a full and gorgeous cup; while the fair Euphemia, small and sylph-like, and arrayed in white, looked by contrast with her as the complete realisation of the shy and tender Lily of the Valley blooming in its sheath of green.

The Black Tulip and the Lily of the Valley were in close personal contact; but their meditations, to judge from their aspect, were wide apart. Isabel, moderating her naturally stately gait to Euphemia's convenience, paced along with a serious, not to say sad, countenance; for she felt that her uncle Harry, to whose coming she had looked forward with so lively an interest, if he did not absolutely dislike her, held his liking in abeyance, as if she were primarily under suspicion—and that she both resented and failed to understand. Her cousin, on the contrary, stepped as to a measure, and let her bright eyes rove carelessly round, now and again whistling excellent imitations of the episodic and sleepy notes of the garden birds, drowsy after their early debauch of song.

'Oh, I do love to be up early in the summertime!' exclaimed Euphemia, in her happy carelessness failing to remark her cousin's serious abstraction. 'Don't you, Isabel?—don't you?'

'I do, my dear,' answered Isabel smiling on her. 'I like to be up early all the year round. It's so pleasant, as Sir Walter Scott used to say,

to break the neck of the day's work before breakfast.'

'How do you know Sir Walter Scott used to say that?' asked Euphemia with a touch of child-like pique and wonder on her face.

'How do I know! I've read it, of course, my dear,' said Isabel with a look of wonder in her turn.

'What a lot of things you seem to read, Isabel! You always make me feel like a goose; when you're not here, I rather fancy myself as a clever sort of person.'

'My dear Phemy!' exclaimed Isabel, 'it's not right of me to make you feel like a goose, because you are not a goose at all, but a very bright, dear, clever little song-bird!'

'Oh, it's nice of you to say that, Bell!' said Phemy, hugging her cousin's arm. 'I like it, you know, though I don't believe it's true.'

'It is true, indeed, my dear,' said Isabel; 'and I shall blame myself very much if anything I may say should somehow make you think poorly of yourself. Forgive me, dear. It is only my schoolmistress way, which I am afraid I can't very easily get out of, to quote books I've read and to name authors I happen to be interested in. I'll try not to do it, my dear.'

'I wish you were not a schoolmistress, Bell.'

'What would you have me be? A mill-girl, or a milliner, or a telegraphist?'

'Bell! you know well enough it is not necessary that you should be anything but a lady.'

'Merely to be a lady, dear,' said Isabel, 'is not an occupation by which you can make a hundred and fifty pounds a year; and to be a schoolmistress is.'

'You know what I mean, Bell,' said Euphemia. 'Father always says he has more for us all than he knows what to do with. Why don't you stay with us altogether? I daresay father would give you a hundred and fifty a year for yourself.'

'My dear Phemy, I know Uncle George is the best and kindest and most generous man in the world. He is too good, but— Well, the fact is I can't endure to be idle, and I like to earn my hundred and fifty for myself in my own way.'

'I can't understand,' said Phemy, 'why you want to be so independent. It's not like a girl at all,' she added, while she blankly felt and vaguely resented that Isabel was stronger, cleverer, more resolute than a woman had any right to be. It was absurd—and in a sense improper—in a woman to strive to provide herself with those things which fathers (and husbands) were expressly created to find for her. 'I suppose, then, Bell, you wouldn't marry a man with money unless you had money too?'

'I should prefer to have some money of my own,' answered Isabel, as if she were delivering an opinion which she had seriously pondered. 'But I think that "in that connection," as the Americans say, it would not matter much if I had money or my husband had money, or we both had nothing but hands and heads to provide a living. Marriage, you see, is like no other relationship; it is—or it should be, I think—not the joining of two persons together, but the bringing together of the two parts of one complete person.'

'Like a hook and an eye, I suppose?' said Euphemia.

'If you like to put it like that, my dear,' answered Isabel; and then she continued the serious exposition of her view of marriage. 'So, you see, what the one has belongs to both, and what the one wants the other makes up. There can be no question of mine or thine, of different interests, if they are properly matched—that is, I suppose,' she added half-musingly, 'if they truly and unreservedly love each other.'

'What a queer girl you are, Isabel!' exclaimed Euphemia.

'Am I? Perhaps I am,' said Isabel with resignation.

'How you can think of all these awfully wise things, I can't make out!'

'I can't help thinking of "things," as you call them, when I'm alone.'

'Well,' said Euphemia, returning in triumph to the point of conviction she had at first wished to make, 'that's what I tell you: you've no business to be alone. Father always says it's an absurd shame that a clever, handsome girl like you should not get married.—Tell me now, Bell dear, just between our two selves, why you won't accept George?'

'Really, Phemy dear, that is a plain question!'

'Don't you think him nice? Don't you like him?' urged Phemy.

'I like him very much; but'—

'Do you like any one else better?' pursued Phemy.

'That's not the question, my dear,' said Isabel, evading the point with a light laugh. 'To think,' she exclaimed with another laugh, 'that all my serious lecture about marriage has been thrown away! Don't you understand, my dear, that in my view a girl must not only like a man, but understand and admire him, and sympathise with his ambitions very much, to be ready to spend all her life with him? I couldn't marry George—though it's impertinent to say that, since he has never asked me—but I couldn't marry him, because I don't think I could spend all my life with him.'

'But,' said Phemy, 'don't you think you could have an affection for a man you didn't admire in those other ways?'

'Oh, affection!' said Isabel; 'that's another thing. But I think I give all my affection to my family—to uncle and aunt, and you and George. You may have an affection for a person you wouldn't care to marry.'

'George hasn't asked you yet, Bell,' said Euphemia, with a clear intonation in her tone, 'but depend upon it he will ask you.'

'You don't mean you will tell him?' exclaimed Isabel in a hot flush of maidenly alarm. 'If you tell him, Phemy, what I have said to you in confidence, I will never forgive you!'

'I won't say anything to him about it, my dear,' said Phemy. 'Don't be so afraid. But do tell me one thing more: what kind of man do you think you could love very, very much?'

Isabel, however, evidently thought she had said enough in confidence; for she answered lightly: 'I don't think I could ever love a man that was not at least twenty years older than myself: I couldn't respect a younger man.'

'Now, you're not serious,' said Euphemia with a pout; 'and I won't tell you the kind of man I could love very, very much.'

'Oh, do tell me that, please, Phemy dear,' said Isabel, relieved and gratified that confidence was now to be diverted to the other side.

'Well,' said Euphemia, hugging still closer her cousin's arm, 'the man I would love very much must be like my dear father. He may be as old as he likes'—

'What?' said Isabel. 'Seventy or eighty?'

'No; not quite so old as that. I think thirty will do. He needn't be very good-looking—I don't think I care for good-looking men: they're so much taken up with themselves and their hair and their moustaches—but he must be very good and very kind and very generous.—But there's the breakfast bell: we mustn't keep mother waiting. I'll tell you some other time.'

CHAPTER IV.—THE TAME PHILOSOPHER.

When they entered the breakfast-room, the household was already assembled for morning prayers, and the master of the house sat in his place at the table with the prayer-book before him, and the unopened letter-bag and the uncut morning paper ready to his hand. Isabel and her cousin dropped silently into vacant seats by the door, and the function went on, Isabel, it must be confessed, feeling and showing considerable preoccupation: she was familiar with that kind of thing twice a day at school. The prayers were decorously and feelingly read, while Tummy, who was a privileged client of the house, and who had been brought up in the Methodist communion, interjected at every pause of the master a fervent 'Amen!' and then the men-servants and maid-servants trooped out with a cheerful countenance to the day's duties and relaxations. Then also Mr Suffield turned with alacrity to the letter-bag, to which he and his wife alone possessed a key. He opened it while the family took their places at table, and Tummy brought in the hot dishes.

'Here's two for you, mother, said Suffield, dealing out the letters; 'three for you, George—and one o' them in a lady's hand; that won't do, lad; three, four, five, six—bless me!—seven, eight for "H. Raynor, Esq., C.M.G." That must be you, Harry; and most o' them directed and redirected.—Ah, Isabel, my lass, and here's one solitary epistle for you. H'm! seems to me I ought to know the fist. Redirected twice over. Well, there you are.'

Isabel took her letter and opened it with misgiving. The first words she read blanched her face to a deathly shade, and almost made her faint with grief, pain, and apprehension. But no one noticed her emotion—except George, who always kept an interested eye on her—because of the entrance of a guest, and Isabel devoured part of her letter unquestioned.

Mr Suffield kept open house, and a lavish table without ostentation; for it is altogether a mistake to suppose that only those who have inherited landed estates and personality running to five or six figures have the art of frank and free hospitality. That is really not an art at all, but an instinct, humane and hearty; and the cost-

monger may in his degree possess it as much as, if not more than, the duke. Mr Suffield's nature was lordly, if not ducal; and the amount he disbursed in casual largess, as well as in regular beneficence and undemonstrative hospitality, would have impoverished many a man of considerable means. Many and various were the 'friends' who dropped in at meal-times when the master was known to be at home, but of all, none was more constant in his friendly habit than the present visitor, Mr Ebenezer M'Fie. He seldom came when Mr Suffield was away—for he seemed to know that he was not greatly admired or beloved by the mistress of the house—but when Suffield was at home he came regularly to breakfast.

He was a dry and somewhat toothless little Scotsman, who had failed as schoolmaster and as editor, and who now lived—it was suspected, but scarcely known—on certain meagre earnings as a teacher and preacher and on occasional 'loans'—or, more properly, gifts—from his generous friend Suffield. He was not a very estimable person; but Suffield delighted in him—in his learning and his eloquence. Mrs Suffield unkindly called him 'George's tame philosopher,' and not infrequently hinted that the sole reason of her husband's belief in the tame philosopher's wisdom was that he was the only one besides himself whom he had ever heard talk: her inveterate opinion being that her husband monopolised usually the conversation of the house. The philosopher's style of speech seemed to be modelled on the writings of the late Thomas Carlyle; it was English—of a heavy and involved kind—but it was uttered with so abominable an accent that it was unintelligible to most people. Mr Suffield had given attention to it, and therefore seemed to understand it; but his son, who had not patience to quarry a meaning out of the rugged and barbarous eloquence of the philosopher, did not scruple at times to call him 'an old ass.'

'George Suffield,' exclaimed the philosopher now, fervently shaking hands with his host, 'I'm glad to see ye again, hale and hearty, out o' that welter o' humanity, that roaring loom o' Time they call London.'

'I'm not here for long, though, Eben,' said Suffield, returning his pressure.

'Yet a little while—I know, man. But ye may abide among your own people longer than ye at the present thoughtless fleeting moment intend. Ye *may*: I *hope* ye may. The domain of the Possible, man, is immeasurably spacious: there are no limits to the realm of Hope.'

'Just so, Eben,' said Suffield, 'but'—

'Fiddle-de-dee, my dear,' said his wife. 'The sausages are getting cold: will you help them?—I'm much as usual, thank you, Mr M'Fie,' said she in answer to the philosopher's polite inquiry concerning her well-being.—'Will you sit here? This is my brother, Mr Harry Raynor; the others you know.—Isabel, dear, that's a steak-and-kidney pie before you. You don't look well, my dear; you and Phemy have been out too early.'

'I'm very well, thank you, aunt,' answered Isabel, recovering herself with an effort: her letter she had already put in her pocket: she feared to finish reading it then.

George watched her with perturbed spirit and jealous eye: from whom, he asked himself, could have come the letter which had caused her such lively emotion, and which she had crammed away unread?—from whom but from a lover? And yet her emotion did not seem to be of a pleasant kind. Could it be that the lover was ill? In order to hide his perturbation and to refrain from conversation, George opened out *The Lancashire Gazette*. He found and began to read the notice of the play which he had seen the night before, and which had been discussed on his father's return. He was quickly interested. He usually affected to despise all except metropolitan journalism, but here was vigorous and fearless writing which he was compelled to respect and admire. He could not contain his interest.

'By jingo!' he exclaimed, 'here's Alan Ainsworth going it like one o'clock!'

"Going it like one o'clock," said the philosopher, pausing with a bit of toast near his mouth, 'is a strange phrase of the vulgar tongue, and to the undiscerning eye appears absurd and meaningless. It would be curious to inquire concerning its origin—whence and how—by what association, concatenation, or linking of ideas—it comes to be used to express the extremity of speed, vigour, or abandonment.'

That was properly regarded as but a reflective parenthesis that did not demand discussion. Suffield took polite note of it, however.

'Yes; just so, Eben,' said he; and then turned to his son with lively concern, and asked: 'Pitching into the play, is he? It's sure to be well done. Read it out, lad.'

Isabel, for her part, welcomed this request of her uncle: it would keep curious eyes and questions from herself—she was conscious of appearing pale and disturbed—it would spare her the necessity of making and sharing in conversation; and the interest of the matter might turn her mind a little from the trouble that had seized it. George read, nothing loth, while his father interjected 'H'm's' and 'Ha's' of acceptance or approval, and the philosopher listened with his hand to his ear and with the air of a man who had been in his time a schoolmaster and an editor, and withal a critic. The article was what is commonly called 'a slating' of both play and players; and the 'slating' was very vigorously done, spite of the fact that concerning both players and play London was supposed to be very enthusiastic. 'A noble tragedy,' declared the critic, 'which was altogether unsuited to stage representation, has been laid sacrilegious hands on by the playwright and the play-actor, and the result is an indifferent melodrama, badly acted; with much more, general and particular, to the same effect. Finally he said: 'Of course the play has been hailed in London as a triumph of stage management and acting; but it is in reality a triumph of pedantry, dullness, and incapacity.'

'What do you think of that?' cried Suffield in triumph, when the reading was finished. 'That's just what you were trying to say last night, I suppose, Isabel?'

'Just what I was *trying* to say, uncle,' said Isabel with a smile.

'Yes,' said the philosopher, looking round, perking himself, and clearly demanding the atten-

tion of the table; 'the young man writes with great promise—great promise, indeed.'

'Mr Ainsworth,' said young George, 'if I understand him at all, would hope there is performance there as well as promise.'

'No doubt, sir; no doubt, my young friend,' said the philosopher. Then, eluding the point presented, he continued: 'He is right. We are the slaves of rumour. We accept alike the reputation of book or man.'—

'Or play,' suggested George.

'Or play,' accepted the philosopher.

'Or play-actor,' suggested George, pleased with his success.

'Or play-actor, sir,' again accepted the philosopher. 'We accept their reputation, if it be made in London, let us say'—

'Or made in Germany,' again suggested George.

'—because,' continued the philosopher, without taking account this time of the interruption, 'we are ourselves incompetent to distinguish between the estimate of ignorant exaggeration and that of the authentic insight of the few who know what they say, and say only what they know.'

'You're eating no breakfast, Mr M'Fie,' said Mrs Suffield. '—George, my dear, see that Mr M'Fie has something; whereupon Suffield recommended the dish before him.'

'Ah,' said the philosopher, 'I believe that in the great metropolis they call these little things saveloys.'

'Sausages, sir; these are sausages,' said young George. 'Saveloys are, I understand, a very inferior and vulgar kind of sausage.'

'Mixed originally, I think the dictionaries say,' Isabel was tempted to remark, 'with brains—as Sir Joshua Reynolds said his colours were.'—Then remembering her promise in the garden to Euphemia, she said aside to her: 'I beg your pardon, dear.'

'Now,' said the philosopher, shaking himself up as if he were a bottle of medicine, 'I call that very good; really witty, and of the true Attic flavour. I do.'

'Oh yes, Isabel's a smart girl,' observed Suffield genially; then with his kindly eye more particularly on his brother-in-law, he insisted: 'I say, Isabel's a clever girl.'

'No doubt,' said Uncle Harry, while he shrewdly considered his niece.

'Please, uncle,' said Isabel, blushing with confusion, and appealing to Suffield in a low voice, 'don't!—don't make me ashamed of myself!'

'No need, my lass,' said Suffield aloud, 'to be ashamed of yourself!'

But Isabel thought there was, especially with Uncle Harry's shrewd eye, which she felt to be cold and critical, fixed on her. She lapsed into a painful silence, on the sudden suspicion that she must appear a very forward and conceited young woman. But why did Uncle Harry—her father's own brother—regard her so? Why did he look at her, not only without affection or tenderness, but—it seemed to her—with absolute aversion? Did she strike him as being so disagreeable a creature either in character or in appearance, or in both?

But, said the philosopher, seizing the opportunity of the pause, 'to return to the interesting subject we were discussing. I said a few moments

ago that we are the slaves of Rumour. About this play now: we either accept the opinion of the great Babylon borne on the wings of the newspapers, or we accept this young man's opinion.'

'I don't,' said young George promptly.

'My dear young sir,' said the philosopher, 'I question that. You think that you don't. To all but a few'—and there was a clear hint in his eye and his manner that he considered himself one of the few—'current report is irrefutable evidence. To see with our own eyes—to hear with our own ears'—

'Goodness me!' exclaimed Mrs Suffield impatiently; 'whose ears should I hear with if not with my own?'

'Ah, my dear lady,' crackled on the philosopher, now enjoying himself immensely, 'this commonly thought easiest of all things is of things hard to be done one of the hardest—nay, the hardest of all.' And so on, and so on he continued, becoming more and more intoxicated with the sound of his own voice and swollen with the volume of his own verbosity.

And his audience seemed to listen with attention and interest. The excellent Suffield, however, was the only person who toiled after him through his obscure and sounding platitudes in the single-minded hope of carrying away some wisdom. All the others were more or less occupied with things of livelier and more intimate concern. Mrs Suffield was thinking over her arrangements for the day—and at the same time giving a ray of attention to her niece, who looked very much less than her usual self that morning; George was still considering, half in pity, half in jealousy, his cousin's preoccupation and depression; Euphemia was chilled and saddened because evidently Isabel cherished a feeling for some one of which she had refused to let her know; Uncle Harry was wondering whether Isabel added to her faults of self-consciousness and conceit that of sulkiness; and Isabel herself was thinking of that letter which was burning her pocket, and resenting—as unkindly and undeserved—the cold and critical regard under which Uncle Harry was keeping her. The notable thing was that to all save to the philosopher and his simple-minded patron and pupil, and to Isabel herself, the real centre of interest was Isabel.

'Well, now, my dear,' said Mrs Suffield at length to her husband, thrusting into a pause in the philosopher's discourse, 'we have a great many things to do to-day, and we haven't yet begun to do any of them. The girls and I must see to things,' continued she, rising.—'George, my dear, will you ring the bell?—If you, my dear,' said she again to her husband, 'want to discuss the affairs of the universe with Mr M'Fie, you'd better take him into the garden.'

'My dear lady,' said the philosopher, 'I and your husband have had our say, I think.' (As matter of fact, Suffield had said nothing but 'H'm!' or 'Ye-es' now and then.)

The philosopher rose then and straggled out through the open French window into the garden. Suffield was politely following him, when Uncle Harry laid his hand on his arm.

'Who,' he asked, 'is your Mentor, George?'

'I don't know about Mentor,' answered Suffield, 'but he is a curious, clever creature.'

'Strong in the wind, but weak in the legs, I should think, George,' said Uncle Harry.

'I shall be back to you in a minute or two, aunt,' said Isabel; and she fled to her room and locked herself in to read her letter.

ROASTING VERSUS BAKING.

It is a little difficult to give an exactly correct definition of the word Baking so far as it concerns the treatment of meats; for although its generally accepted meaning is cooking in ovens, it can be shown that joints may be roasted in an oven as perfectly as (or possibly more perfectly than) they can be done in the front of a fire. The real difference between an oven suited or unsuited for roasting meat is chiefly in the provision or absence of effective ventilation. There are other features to be considered, as will be explained directly, but the primary variation is this. If we take an example in the oven of an old-fashioned open range, we shall have about the most primitive thing of its kind; and the results, if we attempt to roast in it, justify the long-standing prejudice against oven-cooked meat, a prejudice which appears to have made up its mind to die hard. The old open-range oven is the root of the prejudice, although many of the cheap descriptions of more modern ranges should have some share of the blame. What is generally termed (and condemned) as baked meat is that which is served up apparently saturated with moisture, and having a peculiarly noticeable flavour, different from what is experienced with joints roasted in front of the fire, and decidedly to its disadvantage. This is meat cooked in an oven which is innocent of ventilation, not scrupulously clean, and with a roasting-pan which favours the spitting and subsequent calcination of what fatty juices drip from the article being cooked. It is, however, quite possible to get these results with a really good and perfected range oven, if carelessly used; so it will be seen that another feature exists conducive or otherwise to good results, and this is the care exercised by the cook.

Assuming an oven is ventilated, and ventilated as it should be, with both an inlet and outlet ventilator—for one will not act alone, neither will one act without the other—then both must be open if ventilation is sought for. Supposing these to exist, then we may rely upon all steam and vapours driven from the joint by the action of the heat being promptly carried away, just as effectively as if the meat were suspended in front of a fire. This is desirable and good. Next, we may assume the oven is really clean—sweet, in fact; so that if it is heated when empty, it will yield no odour upon opening the door. In assuming this state of things, it is to be feared we assume too much in reality the majority of cases. Often and often, when there is a complaint that odours of cooking are

obvious in other parts of the house than the kitchen, the objectionable smell is due to a hot oven, but which has nothing in it—that is, nothing being cooked. Bold as the assertion may be, it is true, that the majority of ovens in busy kitchens are foul—no milder word will describe the state. The most delightful practice in relation to ovens which it has been my pleasure to observe, is, I believe, peculiar to Devonshire. They whitewash the interiors of their range ovens. This practice is excellent in many ways, and it is ingenious. Firstly, it makes the ovens light, very much so; and it is doubtful if ovens would be allowed to get so dirty if they were not so dark and the dirt so inconspicuous. Then the lime-whiting, which is the particular ingredient of whitewash, is a material approaching the nature of a disinfectant; anyway, it is not favourable to smells or odours of any kind whatever. Lastly, it so plainly shows by discoloration when objectionable results may be expected and the limewash should be renewed. Any odd-man or gardener or boy can apply it, say once a fortnight. Whitewashing the inside of an oven is as good as lining it with tiles, and has none of the many objections this latter arrangement would involve. Next best to whitening oven interiors is the practice of regularly scrubbing them out, as one would have a cupboard scrubbed. Surely the place, limited as it is as regards space, where we complete the preparation of our cooked foods should be wholesomely clean.

Assuming, then, that the oven is really clean, a further necessary feature is a suitable roasting-pan. Now, a very common and prevalent idea is that anything in the form of a tin pan will do to place under the joint, providing its size is correct or nearly so, and that, of course, it is not leaky or imperfect. This idea is a very wrong one, and accountable for a good deal of the difference between what we may still continue to call roasted and baked meat. A single pan, after the cooking process has been going on for a short time, becomes partially filled with liquid fat, and after a further short period, this substance begins to boil and continues to do so practically without cessation until the cooking is finished. The objectionable feature is that fat, when boiling, has little bursts of air or gas, causing particles to be projected against the highly heated plates of the oven, where it is instantly scorched up, evolving the strong and disagreeable odour of burning fat so commonly associated with oven-cooking. This action of the fat is termed 'spitting,' and when the oven is very hot and the fat at the boil, it is really a little shower that falls upon the oven sides. Occasionally, especially when the oven is allowed to become overheated, this occurs to such an extent, that upon opening the oven door, quite a cloud of hot disagreeable vapour escapes. The remedy for this is to have a double pan—that is, two pans, almost the duplicates of each other, except that one is made to fit in a suitable manner within the other. (They are obtainable at all ironmongers and stores in a variety of sizes.) The object of a double pan is that the lower one is arranged to receive water, and when it is filled, this water consequently envelops the lower part of the upper pan. In other words, the upper pan rests in water during the time

that cooking operations are in progress. The result of this is that the fat never boils; and if we prevent the boiling, then we prevent the spitting and subsequent odour; the discoloration and spoiling of the fat being also averted. Water reaches a maximum temperature of two hundred and twelve degrees when it boils, and this is too low a heat for fat to boil at; consequently, while there is water in the lower pan, the fat in the upper pan is motionless, and does not boil or act disagreeably. The use of a double pan, it will be seen, tends very materially to keep the oven clean and wholesome.

There are a considerable number of people who strongly assert that oven-cooked meat, under the best of circumstances, with the most skilled care and attention and other details, cannot be made to equal in flavour and other advantages a joint roasted in front of a fire. This, as before mentioned, is really owing, first, to the influence of a rooted prejudice; secondly, an oven or appliances (or care) unsuited to give the desired results. Roasting in front of the fire requires no special care as regards ventilation, choice of pans, &c., and is therefore at an advantage in this respect, that carelessness or ignorance is less likely to have an ill effect. When meat is roasted in an oven, the different features dwelt upon are essential; but if these features exist, then the roasting is done with less trouble and with decidedly less fuel than by the other means. The fact of oven-roasting being least trouble is testified by the majority of cooks giving preference to it, without any other tangible reason.

It is interesting to notice how long the prejudice to oven-cooked meat has existed, and how real and vigorous it has always been. Count Rumford, who may be considered the pioneer in regard to improvements in heating and cooking appliances, was the first to introduce an oven, and also, strangely enough, an oven pan, which gave the requisite results, equal to the best we can get to-day. He, as a very capable authority, gave out that meat roasted in an oven was superior in flavour and better generally than that roasted in front of a fire. This was in 1802, ninety years ago, when it may be supposed ovens and oven-roasting could not have been nearly so well understood, either by makers or users, as now. Mr W. Mattieu Williams, another high authority, and but recently deceased, also pronounced in favour of oven-roasting as the superior method. Count Rumford remarked, in one of his lectures, that he despaired of getting any Englishman to believe his words, showing that he was fully alive to the prejudice in all its strength. Mattieu Williams in his *Chemistry of Cookery* makes some very telling remarks in relation to this subject. He wonders how it is that beef (when being cooked) is attributed with emitting vapours that are injurious to beef, and mutton with vapours injurious to mutton. He says it is to the effect of burning fat that ill results are chiefly due.

It is not intended to advocate the use of ovens to the exclusion of front roasting, for the latter method of cooking joints has no ill features beyond the greater attention needed and the greater expenditure of fuel. A good and modern range should be capable of cooking both ways at one and the same time if desired; but if the

kitchen is a busy one and time has to be economised, then the cook may certainly be trusted to put a joint in an oven if the necessary features to ensure good results exist.

ISABEL DYSART.*

CHAPTER III.

THE fumes of that excitement still troubled Isabel's brain next day. She scarcely heard what her mother was talking of during all the rest of the evening, and the first thing that came into her mind when she woke was that incident in the dark road—the big gables against the sky, the blackness of the shadows, and the encounter—which she thought had marked her for life. It seemed to her, as she dressed, that there was still a red spot on her cheek where *that* had been, and that he had put a brand upon her to mark her for his property, as the farmers do with their sheep. She rubbed it once more till it did really blaze, as she fancied, and again called Mrs Dysart's attention. 'It must really have been a bee that stung you, Isabel. What a strange thing at this time of year,' her mother said.

And then there was the thought of what he had said at parting. He would come for his answer to-morrow. To-morrow! That was now this day. And why should there be such a hurry for an answer, and what did he mean by going to London? There had never been a word about it before—going to London!—when he was in the heart of everything in Edinburgh, and with the greatest doctor in Edinburgh, and so much thought of there. Never had such an idea been suggested till now. To London! The thought made Isabel's heart beat a little. None of her sisters had gone farther afield than Glasgow, and that was Jeanie, whose man Mrs Dysart put up with so painfully, and who was never done flourishing the shops in Buchanan Street and the conveniences of a big town before the eyes of her mother and sisters. What would they think of a London lady that could walk in the parks, and see all the grand shows, and the King himself in the streets? Isabel's bosom could not but thrill in spite of herself with that suggestion. But what was all the hurry for, and an answer to-morrow, and everything brought to a crisis in a moment? The more she thought it all over, the more her head went round. Willie Torrence had been her sweetheart all her life. That their intercourse might come to a sudden crisis at any moment, had always been a thing possible—but nothing so hasty, so immediate as this. To be summoned to accede to a sudden proposal, to take his hand and come with him, as if it was a thing which she was sure to do for the asking, and for which she was quite ready, was in itself an offence almost beyond pardon, even if there had not been the bold freedom, the outrage—for so the girl felt it—of the previous incident. What did Isabel care if he were Sir William twenty times over, and who was he that he should dare to think she would take him whenever he pleased to ask her? Her pride and her spirit were all in arms.

It added no little to Isabel's excitement that

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the young minister should choose this day of all others to make one of his visits. He came in early in the afternoon, coming through the garden, and was seen by Mrs Dysart from the window, who exclaimed at the sight of him, 'Bless me, Isabel—Mr Murray with a gun over his shoulder! What will be going to happen now? the volunteers called out, and even the minister under arms? But that would mean an invasion at the very least, and there's no Bonaparty to trouble the world now.'

Isabel was not interested by the prospect of an invasion, though her heart gave a jump to hear the minister with his light, active foot come up-stairs. 'I'll take care o' it, sir—I'll take care o' it—if it disna gang aff of itsel,' Jenny was heard to call after him as the drawing-room door opened; and Mrs Dysart plunged into the subject before the young man had found a chair. 'Was that you, Mr Murray, carrying a gun?' she said. 'Lord bless me! I just cried out: "There'll be word of a new invasion." But perhaps it was just for a day's shooting, after all? There's no harm I know of,' she added apologetically, 'why a minister should not shoot a bird for his dinner as well as other men.'

'Not that,' he said with a smile; 'neither the one nor the other—but nothing very cheerful. I am going to take my turn to-night in the churchyard to watch our graves, that there may be no desecration. I have been up to Mr Philip Morton's to borrow his gun.'

'But, dear me,' said Mrs Dysart, 'there are surely plenty of men without the minister.'

'And why should the minister be behind when there's unpleasant work to do?' he asked. 'They do not like it, as how should they: and neither do I like it: but I would watch night and day,' he said with a hasty rising of colour, 'before that last resting-place of my poor folk was disturbed—if it was to cost me my life.'

'And that it might well do,' cried Mrs Dysart; 'for you're not too strong a man: you should mind that.'

'I am strong enough for my duty, as I think every man is,' he replied; 'it's never that that harms.'

'But there's very different notions on that point. Here was Willie Torrence maintaining with me the other night that a doctor's duty was just the other way; and he was earnest about it too, as earnest as you are,' Mrs Dysart said.

Murray gave a quick unconscious glance round the room, which seemed to him in a moment to be full of traces of his rival: he saw them in Isabel's silent air bending over her work, as if entirely absorbed in it, taking no notice of anything, she who generally was so ready to take her part in the conversation. He gave her a long regretful look, of which she was partly conscious, though she never lifted her eyes.

'And I would not say he was wrong,' he answered with a sigh. 'He's an enthusiast for his profession, as every man should be. I would not say he was wrong. But,' added the minister, 'I wanted you to tell poor Mrs Anderson, if you'll be so kind, I've kept a special eye upon that spot. She will know what I mean; and all is safe, as safe as if her arms had been about the place.'

'Where her little Jeanie lies,' said Mrs Dysart, her eyes filling with tears. 'Oh, Mr Murray, you know what's in a mother's heart.'

'I have had one of my own,' he said with a glimmer in his eyes also.

How did Isabel know what all that meant? She never looked up, did not listen, but kept going over in her head the utterance of another voice: 'I'll be Sir William some day, and you my lady.' Very different—very much more interesting than this dreary talk of midnight watches and of graves—hot with life and ambition and excitement, things that make the blood flow fast in your veins—and yet— Her eyes were on her work all the time, and her needle flying as if for bare life: but she felt everything that was passing, and the conclusion to which her other lover was making up his mind. He, too, was acquiescing, putting her into the arms that had seized her so boldly, believing that she was ready to follow Willie Torrence as soon as he held up his finger. The girl felt as if she could have jumped up and cried aloud, and rejected that bold suit there and then.—To whom? To her mother and to the other, who was relinquishing his hopes so easily? Would they have known what she meant if she had cried out that 'No,' only 'No,' no more, which almost burst from her lips? They would have thought it nerves or temper, or perhaps an indignant throwing off of every blame from the other—the man she was supposed to love. When she rose to give her hand to the minister, and met his wistful regretful look, which seemed to question her very soul, her spirit rose in wild impatience, 'You should not find fault,' she cried hastily, 'with them that are not here to answer for themselves.'

'Isabel!' cried her mother in dismay.

'And I don't,' said the minister, with a slight quivering of his lip; 'I find no fault. I just hold by my side, as he holds to his. We must all do that, if we're to act like men.'

'Bairn, what are you thinking of?' said Mrs Dysart.—'She is just a great one for standing up for the absent,' she added, in an apologetic tone, as young Murray went away. But she, too, made up her mind that Isabel's choice was fixed, and that this great question was to be held in doubt no more. They both stood watching the minister go through the garden with his gun, involuntarily, almost unaware what they were doing in the preoccupation of their minds. Going away, Mrs Dysart thought, carrying with him all her hopes of seeing Isabel established near her, and in the care of a good man. Her heart was heavy with doubts and fears for what might be before her child. 'You will maybe be sorry some day,' she said with a sigh.

'Sorry—for what?' said Isabel: and then she threw her work aside and hastened to her room, to put on her blue pelisse and hurry out—where? for a walk—for a long walk, she said to Jenny in the kitchen.—It was such a fine day—at this season it was best to take advantage of every fine day—

Isabel did take a long walk, and as she came back, passed through Musselburgh, where there were more people than usual in the streets, and some apparent commotion which was no less unusual. She could not but hear some scraps of talk as she passed—something about a riot

in Edinburgh, and some one who would have to flee the country—of which she took no conscious notice. What did a riot in Edinburgh matter to her? If she had thought of it, she would have taken care not to pass by Uncle John's house on her way home: but her mind was so full of other things that she never remembered this danger, until she had been seen and hailed from the window, where there was generally a watch kept in the afternoon, lest Isabel should go by. She was very reluctant to be thus stopped, her mind being too full for talk, and for finding answers to all Aunt Mary's questions. And what was worse still, here again was Mr Murray, to whom she had betrayed herself so short a time before, and who met her with the same wistful, half-compassionate, half-reproachful look, as if—which was more ridiculous than all the rest—she was doing any injury to him. But to resist Aunt Mary's entreaty was impossible. 'I was just wanting somebody to send upon a message to your mother—and the minister was offering to take it up himself, though it's a mile or more out of his way.'

'That's nothing, nothing!' young Murray cried.

'You're very kind,' said Aunt Mary; 'but now that Easabell's here, she can take it herself. Your mother will be dreadfully shocked, my darlin', and so will you your own self. It's just awful news.'

'There's a new edition of the *Courant* with it all in: and nothing but a change in the ministry, or rebellion in the colonies, or the King's serious illness, would in an ordinary way justify that,' said Uncle John. He had the paper all crisp and new in his hands. 'I got it as a regular subscriber, sent out by an express; and by this time that bit slip of paper is worth its weight in gold. Your mother will like to see it. It's more satisfactory than hearing of a thing like that just by word of mouth.'

'What is it, Uncle John?'

'It's not said,' cried Aunt Mary, 'that anybody is blamed but just the Professor himself: the rioters were just keen after him: and his house has been mobbed and all his windows broken.'

'And they say he will have to flee the country,' the minister added in a solemn tone.

'I heard that in the town,' said Isabel, still indifferent, 'something about fleeing the country. But who is it? It cannot be these terrible villains, Burke and Hare.'

'My dear,' said Uncle John, 'it's worse in one way, though not in another. These fiends in human shape are safe in prison; and I'm hoping they'll go out from there only by the gallows. But to think of a Professor in Edinburgh College, and one of the first surgeons in the world, and an elder of the kirk, and a very respectable man—'

'Lord bless us!' cried Aunt Mary, 'it's enough to make a person mistrust the General Assembly itself.'

'I am in a hurry to get back,' said Isabel shortly. She knew in her inmost soul that Mr Murray would propose to 'see her home,' and this was more alarming to her than any news that could be in the papers—or so at least she thought.

There was a little trill of voices all beginning to speak at once; but Uncle John rose up in his large seafaring person from his chair and dominated them all, waving the paper in his hand. 'Where do you think,' he said impressively, 'the last of these pair victims was found?—Isabel! in a box, in a cellar, in one of the grand new Edinburgh houses, the house of Stokes, the great Professor.'

'Dr Stokes—that all the College folk were so proud of, and his name in all the papers!' cried Aunt Mary breathless.

Murray said no word; but he placed a chair carefully behind Isabel, as if she might faint or fall.

'Dr Stokes!' said Isabel, still unawakened. 'Yes, I know about him: he is the man that— But he is nothing to us. I'll tell my mother; but she will not be caring so very much.—You may keep your paper, Uncle John, and I must just run away home.'

'You don't understand, Isabel. If it was just him and no more! But there are others that cannot be forgotten when he's named. Oh, the shame to our College and all our grand doctors! But there's more still, more than that.'

'You see, they must all have known,' said Aunt Mary, 'not just one person alone.'

And the minister shook his head. 'Knowing all they know, I fear, I fear,' he said, 'they must have known.'

Isabel's head began to clear slowly: it had been confused with so many thoughts of her own, and had refused to take in any new thing; but now a sharp pang like a knife cut all the web of these thoughts and sent them flying away. 'Dr Stokes,' she repeated, faltering; 'I—begin to mind. He's the chief that—that they all speak about: he's a great man.'

'Great in one way, not, it appears, in another,' said Uncle John with solemnity. 'I would say nothing if it was only him that was in question; for, as you say, Isabel, my dear, he's nothing to us; but there's more, more to think of than only him.'

'It's that poor, poor woman down by Eskside that I'm thinking of most,' added Aunt Mary, shaking her head.

Isabel had by this time come fully to herself: it had flashed upon her like a wild blaze of fire, lighting up the whole landscape, what they meant: but she would not allow it to be seen how she was moved. 'I'll take my mother the paper,' she said, holding herself up with a sort of dignity, 'since you wish it, Uncle John: and tell her. I am sorry for Dr Stokes, if—if anything happens to him, such a great man; but it's no—no—business of ours.—I must not stop another moment,' she cried hurriedly, 'for I was a little late last night, and the days are short, and it's soon dark.'

'If I might see you home, Miss Isabel!'

Aunt Mary frowned behind Isabel's back and shook her head. 'Let her be, let her be; this is no the moment,' she said.

Isabel herself took no notice of his petition; she hurried away, not even hearing him, preserving her composure with a great effort, but with a strange singing in her ears and beating in her heart. She seemed to have heard it all before—to have heard nothing else discussed—

yet to have listened without understanding: till suddenly it was brought home to her what it all meant. Oh, what would it have mattered to her how much or how little the doctors knew? What were the doctors to Isabel? or even Dr Stokes, though he was the greatest surgeon in Edinburgh, and people came from far and near to his classes. The doctors must have known—she had heard nothing but this for twenty-four hours past. But why should she care? The doctors! What were the doctors to her? She repeated this over to herself with a strange bravado, saying the words again and again, as if that would make them true. But her whole brain was on fire, and there was a tightening and oppression in her breast such as Isabel had never felt before.

As she set her face to the wind, it came blowing down keen upon her, bringing voices upon it in broken gusts, flinging words and indistinct phrases in her face, sometimes like the noise of a distant tumult: 'He'll have to flee the country: he's been mobbed, and his windows broken: he'll have to flee the country,' in a hurry and roar of many voices. And then one small note came in, her mother's voice, saying: 'There would be an Assistant or somebody;' and then another—oh, quite another! that said in the dark—'I'm going to London, with a grand opening—and to-morrow I'll come for my answer.' Then the clamour seemed to rise once more over all the dim landscape, the voice of the crowd: 'He'll have to flee the country, flee the country, flee the country!' What a wild, hurrying, dizzying tumult and confusion of sound!

This strong excitement yet confusion which drove her along took all her girlish fright away when she came again to the dark corner of the road. The heavy shadows of the old house had no terrors for her that night. It was not so late, indeed, as the evening before. The sky was clear and still full of light, though there had already risen into it one clear little inquisitive star, the very star that had shone into her window last night and reflected itself in the mirror on her wall. It seemed to have come out now to look after Isabel, to make sure what she was going to do. And she was not surprised, though her heart gave a jump, when something detached itself from the shadow and a figure came forward to meet her. There was no jest of pouncing upon her this time, none of the rough play which had been carried to such unwarrantable lengths the night before. Her hands and her feet grew cold and her head hot in her sense of the great crisis in her life that had suddenly arrived: but she went on to meet him silently, as if they were both figures in a dream. 'So it's you,' she said to him with a catch in her breath as they came together. 'Isabel! you've brought me my answer,' he said. And then they stood and looked at each other in the stillness of the twilight: and a confusion of all those strange echoes came once more over Isabel's brain. 'Will you have to flee the country?' she said slowly. It seemed the only thing there was to say.

'What do you mean—what do you mean? I am not going to flee the country,' he cried indignantly, though with no surprise in his tone. It seemed natural to him, too, that these were the only words she could say.

'And all the time,' said Isabel, 'all the time it was you: and you knew.'

'What are you talking about, Bell? Do you want to mystify me altogether? I'm come for my answer after what passed between us last night. Are you coming with me? That's the question before the house,' said Torrence with a forced laugh.

'They say he has been mobbed and his windows broken; and he's in danger of his life. Oh, Willie! are they after you too?'

'I think you are out of your senses,' he cried. 'Give me no nonsense, but an honest answer. There's great things before me yet: I'll make a lady of you, Bell; you shall have a finer house than any of them, and a carriage, and there's no telling what we'll come to. Just put your hand in mine.'

'What is the difference between fleeing the country and hurrying away to London, that you never thought of before?' she said. 'Oh, Willie Torrence! and your mother? and all of us that were so proud of you.'

'You may be as proud as you like,' he cried desperately; 'a man may make a mistake and be none the worse. I'll be Sir William before all's done. The London hospitals know a man when they see him, not like those asses in Edinburgh. I'm safe enough. Come Bell, give me your hand.'

'Oh,' cried Isabel sinking her voice, 'you were never cruel nor an ill man. Willie! will you say you did not know?'

'What has that to do with it?' he cried, dashing his clenched hand into the air. 'I came here to ask a question, not to answer one. Bell! just you mind what you're doing! You're letting your chance slip as well as mine.'

'I'm going home to my mother: and I've nothing more to say to you, Dr Torrence,' Isabel said.

LEFT-HANDED FOLK.

WHY anybody should be left-handed is one of those matters in which the question is easier put than answered. The reason why we are right-handed has been met by statements and theories more or less plausible. In the first place, it has been shown that the human body is not symmetrical. The right lung is larger than the left. The liver, during the inspiration of the lungs, swings to the right side, so that the centre of gravity of the body is brought nearly over the right foot. The weight of the viscera to the right of the medial line is nearly a pound and a half heavier than that to the left of it. All this, while it gives a mechanical advantage to the right arm in working, and to the right shoulder in raising a weight, shows us also why, passively, burdens are more easily carried on the left shoulder, for in that case we stoop forward so as to bring the centre of gravity through the stronger right limb. Again, it has been pointed out that the left hemisphere of the brain is larger and better supplied with blood-vessels than the right, and that it is the left hemisphere of the brain which, working crosswise, controls the muscles of the right arm and hand. Then there is the sword-and-shield theory, which considers the earliest

condition of man to have been militant. To soldiers, the vital organ, the heart, being on the left side, it was thought necessary to cover it with the shield and wield the sword in the right. True, against these is the wet-nurse theory, which supposes left-handedness to be favoured in youth by the fact of the infant being carried most frequently on the left arm, thus giving more scope to the early use of the child's left hand. Fashion, however, is always alert, and to this imperial mistress even our limbs must submit. Fashion incessantly demands that the right hand should have the preference.

So that, with all these weighty reasons why we should be right-handed, it is marvellous why left-handed people should be found at all. Yet such are by no means uncommon. The teacher of an elementary school who watched the proportion for many years, gave it as his experience, that, in the rural district in which his school was situated, more than five per cent. of the children were left-handed. In these cases the tendency could be shown to be hereditary; and the left hand, even to the size of the thumb-nails, showed itself larger than the right. It was painful to see the attempts made by the left-handed pupils to write and cipher normally; and, after the right hand had been forced into service, the result was a compromise, the writer generally developing a handwriting inclined neither to right nor left. In the making of figures, both the 3 and the 6 were for a time reversed, and 8 in some cases formed by drawing the straight line down and curving the other from below. In the mechanical trades, the carpenter's bench, his gimlets, screws, and many of his planes are made to suit the right hand, so that a left-handed apprentice is handicapped, and must either fight against Nature or obtain tools fitted for the left hand. An elaborate print-cutter's gauge for measuring off different sizes of copper required to be driven into the pattern, if made for a left-handed man is of little value when exposed for sale.

But we do not need to go far for illustrations of how inconvenient a world this is for the left-handed. Purchase a scarf, and the left-handed owner finds the slit, through which the part requires to be pushed to catch the pin, on the wrong side for him. Let him sit down to dinner, and the waiter brings the dishes from which he selects a part to the wrong shoulder. Let him lift a moustache cup, and he perceives his peculiarity has not been taken into account. Let him attempt to mow, and he fain would reverse the shape of the scythe. Let him learn drill or dancing, or endeavour to work in harmonious combination, and his awkwardness is for ever brought home to him.

And yet, on the other side, the despised left hand makes good its claims in many cases to be the defer of the two. The fingers that touch and adjust with such nicety the strings of the violin are surely as cunning as those that move the bow. The hand that guides the reins and steers with exactness the horse through the crowded streets is quite as cunning as, one might say much more than, the hand that wields the whip. But great is fashion, unanswerable is theory. It would appear that as life becomes more and more complex, we are becoming more

and more specialised, and the difference between our limbs is encouraged, rather than hindered, by every pair of scissors turned off at Sheffield, by every screw made in Birmingham, and by every slap administered to the young offending fingers that would dare to shake hands incorrectly.

It is curious to notice the vagaries of humanity in cases where no hard and fast line has been already drawn. Although most right-handed persons put on their coats left arm first, a considerable percentage thrust in the right first. Soldiers fire from the right shoulder, but sportsmen are found who prefer the left. In working with the spade, a proportion of right-handed men grasp the spade with the left and push with left foot and right hand; though, when using an axe, the same individuals would grasp farthest down with the right. The Persians mount their horses from the right side, which is the different side from that mounted by Europeans.

The buttons on coats, &c., are placed on the right side, and the shed of the hair in boys to the left, evidently to suit manipulation by the right hand. The great philosopher Newton records that at first he confined his astronomical observations to his right eye, but afterwards he managed to train his left. But there are persons who could not do this owing to the unequal strength of their eyes. Strange to say the Chinese assign the place of honour to the left. At Kunyenyé, in Africa, Cameron relates being introduced to the heir-presumptive to the throne, the nails of whose left hand had been allowed to grow to an enormous length as a sign of high rank, proving that he was never required to perform manual labour, and also providing him with the means of tearing the meat which formed his usual diet.

The falcon in Europe is carried on the left wrist, but in Asia on the right. The Latin races hold omens to be favourable when towards the right; but the Teutonic races, including our own, when towards the left. The Saxon races, as masters of the sea and pioneers in the laying of railways, have imposed their own rules of the left side on the French and other Latin races, who, however, still in driving and riding keep to the rule of the road derived from their progenitors. The hands of clocks and watches travel from east to west like the sun, or as we draw a spiral from the interior outwards; and we hand around our playing-cards and our hospitable bottle after the same fashion, which like fashion we adhere to in turning a horse, so that the violation of it, or the turning *widderskins*—that is, against the sun—is considered unlucky. It is a curious circumstance how few people ever clasp hands otherwise than having the right thumb outwards, or coil thread save one way.

With regard to symmetry, Nature, when she has a purpose to serve, is nowise loth to depart from it. Indeed, there is hardly a symmetrical human face to be found. The right eye and ear are generally placed higher, and the left leg is frequently the longer. Quadrupeds and very young children are more symmetrical; but the hermit-crab has the claw protruding from the shell the longer; the cachelot or sperm whale has the eye on the one side larger than the other. Parrots rather favour the right claw; and the

African elephant—as Sir S. Baker assured the writer—works most with the right tusk, called on this account by the Arabs ‘the servant.’ Aristotle declares that motion begins from the right. ‘Wherefore the burden should rest on the part moved, and not on the part moving, otherwise motion is more difficult.’ He also looks on the spiral curves of shells as suggesting a right-handed designer. Another ancient philosopher assures us that our dreams are less egotistical and selfish when we are sleeping on our right side than on our left.

Curiosity was naturally highly strung when discoveries were made of exceedingly ancient engravings and sculptures fashioned by cave-men at an era further removed from the earliest Egyptian records than ours is from those. We have the authority of Sir Daniel Wilson that the earliest records of the human race show a preference for the right hand, although not so completely as that shown in modern times. In the scarcely so remote Bronze Age, the preference still holds good. One has only to look over Egyptian, Etruscan, Assyrian, Greek, or Roman pictures, engravings, or sculptures, to see that man was right-handed as he is now, and that he carried his burdens then, as now, mainly on the left shoulder, while his dress and decoration follow in the same lines as the soldier still wears his sword or the shepherd his plaid. At the same time shoes made especially for each foot, and gloves designed for each hand, have more of a modern aspect. The sandals of ancient times are extremely much alike. Among the humble classes in Scotland sixty years ago shoes for young people not made for right and left were preferred.

It is pleasant to be able to record that notwithstanding the sinister ridicule of ancient and modern language and literature, and the antagonist pen and ink demonstrations of doctors, there are and have been many eminent left-handed individuals both professional and gymnastic. A list of these has been preserved to us through the labours of Sir Daniel Wilson, and Charles Reade, the novelist.

THE SHAWMUT TRESTLE.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

By the employees of the Chicago and North Pacific, Lloyd Freeman soon came to be looked upon as a good deal of a martinet. Perhaps he was. But then Lloyd Freeman had gained his training and first experience as an official in England, where, as every one knows, the discipline on the railways is well-nigh perfect. He had topped off his experience by two years in India, where the methods of managing railroads are semi-military, and where all but a very few of the employees are as afraid of an official as a rabbit is of a poacher.

In the great West of America, Freeman found he had a very different lot of men to handle. They were not well-disciplined Englishmen, nor were they scared Hindus. They were free and independent citizens of the almighty United States, and they were ‘just as good as the next man, and a little better, you bet!’ They were

intelligent enough, goodness knows. Freeman thought a large number of them knew a little too much for their own good, for the benefit of the railroad, and for his peace of mind. What these ‘birds-o’-freedom’ objected to most was to be ‘called down’ by Freeman for going on duty untidily attired or a minute or two late. The locomotive firemen especially rebelled because Freeman insisted upon their having the bright parts of their engines at all times in ‘dress-parade’ condition. The crisis came when the general manager issued an order in which he announced that he would hold the engine-drivers personally responsible for the proper attention of their respective firemen in the matter of keeping the engines bright and clean.

Mutterings of complaint became general all along the line, and when two or three of the engine-men had ‘walked the carpet’ (that is, had stood upon the general manager’s office carpet while that gentleman warned and admonished them) rebellious language became loud and frequent. Still, the men had a modicum of good sense, and the older ones admitted to themselves that Freeman’s requirements were reasonable. They were receiving excellent wages, the best paid in the country, and they were well aware that the business of the railroad was not yet remunerative. Both old and young could plainly see that the general manager was as firm as a rock, and they well knew that he had the support of the New York financiers.

‘Yer see, boys,’ said Hank Larrabee, a grizzled old Western railroader, ‘the old man’s got sand, if he is a derved Britisher, an’ don’t yer ferget it!’ He’s a stayer from ‘way-back, an’ if they’s any pushin’ ter be done, yer kin bet yer last pair o’ socks Freeman’ll do the pushin’! My ways ain’t the old man’s ways, but, mark my words, we might as well come ter Freeman’s time first as last.’

Which last remark of Mr Larrabee’s was as true as gospel, and the chances are that the men would have taken the old engine-driver’s advice, if an unlooked-for disturber of the peace had not arrived upon the scene.

It was in the cold weather, a little before Christmas, and Lloyd Freeman was in the bustling Pacific coast town of Portland, Oregon. His business was over for the day, and he was strolling along the brilliantly lighted streets of the town, gazing in the gay windows of the stores, if haply he might find some little knick-knacks which might serve as Christmas gifts for the officials who had so far loyally supported him in his onerous duties.

Freeman was looking in a jeweller’s store window, when he became aware that another person was doing likewise. Once or twice this other person brushed quite closely against Freeman, but our friend supposed the movement accidental, and did not take his eyes from the window. When at last, however, the stranger shoved Freeman so violently that he had to take a step to prevent a tumble through the window, the general manager turned quickly round with an exclamation of surprise.

‘Ah! Don’t quite relish the idea of being crowded, do you?’ asked the man, who was just a little too massive in his build and too coarse-featured to be handsome.

'As there is ample room for both of us, sir,' replied Freeman haughtily, 'I shall be obliged if you will not stand quite so close to me.'

As he spoke, Freeman closely scrutinised the man, whose appearance was just a trifle familiar, yet who was so well wrapped in a rich heavy coat well-trimmed with fur, that he might have been either friend or enemy in disguise.

'Trying to place me, ain't you?' asked the fellow, with a leer, divining Freeman's thoughts. 'Well, I'll assist you. You didn't like being jostled a little bit, did you, Mr Lloyd Freeman? No. But four years ago you crowded a poor wretch to the wall when he was trying to make a fresh start, just because he felt good over a sup of liquor. Do you mind, Mr Lloyd Freeman?'

'Bibb? Michael Bibb?' exclaimed the manager with some surprise. He recognised the man now, though he had last seen him in the West Australian bush.

'No, not Michael Bibb, either! This is a free country, thank Heaven! A man is at liberty to change his name if he sees fit. Michael Bibb expired in Australia; and the man who landed in San Francisco with a few thousands of the yellow in his grip-sack is Mr Demuth—mind that. And bear this in mind also: Robert Demuth, Esquire, don't have to carry a darned ticket-of-leave—do you understand?'

Quietly, to avoid a scene upon the street, Freeman had led the way to a darker side-street.

'Now, look here, Mr Demuth,' said he, humouring the fellow in the matter of his name. 'You go your way, and I'll go mine. I bear you no ill-will; and if you will not annoy me, I pledge you my honour that not a word will I breathe to do you hurt. Why prolong this conversation? Good-night.'

'No, that won't do,' said Demuth, *né* Bibb. 'I'm going to say my say. You don't want to hurt me, eh? Great Heaven! You hurt me enough, didn't you?'

'Why go over that old ground, man? I gave you every chance over yonder. I knew very well when I employed you that you had escaped from Freeman. Yet I gave you a good job, and trusted you, until you took to whisky and began to raise Cain by disaffecting the other workmen. Even then I tried to reason with you; but when you went too far, and imperilled the company's property and the lives of the passengers, I had no option but to turn you over to the police. Now, man, leave the past alone. If you have made a fresh start and are doing well, I am glad of it. Don't try to see me, for it only excites you. You are excited now.'

'Excited? Yes, by thunder! And you'll be excited, Mr Lloyd Freeman, before I get through with you. I'm rich now, I tell you, and in shape to pay off old scores. I'll take you at your word and keep out of your path—but you'll hear from me, darn you! You'll hear from me.'

For the rest of that evening Freeman was somewhat upset; but when, three days later, he returned to Medicine Hat, the general manager had almost forgotten his encounter with Michael Bibb in the streets of Portland.

Yet, when, on New Year's Eve, the startling news that nearly every engineer and fireman, as

well as several of the other employees, had struck work, reached the ears of Lloyd Freeman, the chief executive of the Chicago and North Pacific could not help connecting the unfortunate occurrence with the ex-Australian convict.

By much effort, and chiefly by the promise to arrange and adhere to a fast-time schedule, Freeman had secured a year's contract with the Government to transport the United States mails between Chicago and the cities of Oregon. The contract took effect on the first day of January, when a mail-train must leave Chicago, and another, bound East, must leave Portland. Early in the morning of the third day both trains would be due to pass each other at Medicine Hat. On the night of December the 31st the officials did not know where to lay their hands on more than half-a-dozen loyal engine crews. It would require at least twenty to work the mail-service alone.

Behind closed doors, Lloyd Freeman held a consultation with his subordinate chiefs, while the confidential telegraph operator kept the wires warm sending and taking messages to and from the division superintendents.

'Gentlemen,' said Freeman—and he was the coolest man in the room—'we must run the mail-trains. Not only do we forfeit the year's contract by failing in one day's service, but the prestige and honour of this railroad are at stake. I must take time to think over future methods and of the attitude which we will permanently take towards the strikers. For the present our entire energies must be devoted to the mails. I find we can count upon seven loyal engine crews. The four superintendents have volunteered to man engines and to find firemen to help them. Our Locomotive Superintendent, Mr Scott, says he will take the East-bound train out of this station. I ask none of my colleagues to go where I will not go myself. I will take the West-bound run from Medicine Hat. The strikers dare not interfere with the mail-trains, for the whole power and force of the United States Government will guarantee their safe running. The telegraph operators and station agents are loyal. We will all do our best, and we *must* succeed!'

At four o'clock in the morning of January the 3d, two monster locomotives, attached to each of which were three huge mail-cars, puffed and snorted into the depot at Medicine Hat. Notwithstanding the unfortunate strike, each of these trains had successfully travelled over twelve hundred miles of rough track through some of the dirtiest weather in winter. But they were right 'on time,' and Lloyd Freeman felt elated as he knew that one-half of this most difficult task was accomplished.

The two trusty engines, coated thickly with frozen snow, rain, and mud, were quickly detached from the trains of mail-cars, and fresh hissing and throbbing monsters took their places. Freeman stood on the platform and wished Locomotive Superintendent Scott 'good luck' as that official pulled out with the East-bound train; then he himself mounted the engine headed for the West, where Medway Parker, who was to act as fireman, had already taken his place.

Lloyd Freeman was no greenhorn at the lever and throttle. He was a finished expert; and a

master-hand controlled that magnificent piece of mechanism, as the hundred-ton engine slowly steamed out through the intricate maze of tracks which form the 'yard' at Medicine Hat.

The general manager had gathered some varied and curious experience in his lifetime, but this was the toughest job he had ever tackled. The morning was dark as pitch, although it was after four A.M. when they started out, and it would be dark until seven. It had rained all the previous day, but toward midnight snow and frost had taken the place of rain. Now the weather appeared to be moderating slightly, and rain and sleet, aided by a driving wind, assisted the intense darkness in making it a night to be remembered.

Freeman and Parker were to take the train two hundred and twenty miles, and a stop must be made about half-way for water. They were able to run swiftly and somewhat recklessly, owing to the fact that the strike prevented other trains from being in the way; like all Western roads, the C. & N. P. consisted of a single track only.

For more than two hours the men exchanged scarcely a word; they needed all their breath to face the weather, from which the engine-cab only partially sheltered them. As for Parker, he was busy enough shovelling coal into the furnace.

About half-past six Parker leaned upon his shovel, consulted his watch, leaned his head out of the cab, and then put his mouth to Freeman's ear.

'Don't forget to slow up for Shawmut Trestle,' he said. 'I calculate we'll strike it inside of ten minutes. It's two miles long, and such devil's weather as this makes it a ticklish place to cross at high speed.'

Freeman nodded his head. He knew Shawmut Trestle to be a lofty wooden viaduct, built over a deep gulch. Turning to Parker, he said: 'What are your standing orders to engine-drivers?'

'Ten miles an hour over the trestle,' was the reply.

Again Freeman nodded his head.

'I'll not forget,' he said.

Lloyd Freeman grasped the lever tightly with his left hand, threw back the glass slide in the side of the cab, pulled his fur cap down over his ears, and thrust his head out into the night, which was just commencing to disappear.

About three minutes later Parker was nearly thrown from his feet as Freeman pushed the lever over with a jerk and shouted, 'Brakes!'

Quick as lightning, Parker put down the Westinghouse brake, which acted upon the entire train, and then both men, one on each side of the engine, leaned out as far as they could reach.

What they saw (and it all happened in a moment or two) was a hand-car approaching along the track, a hundred or two of yards ahead of them, upon which stood a man working the car with one hand, and frantically waving a red lantern with the other.

On rushed the engine (slowing up, oh, so slowly!), every quarter-second bearing down more closely upon the man on the hand-car, who seemed utterly oblivious to his possible fate.

Freeman sounded the whistle once—twice—thrice; and then both men on the engine yelled like maniacs.

But even in that brief time and space the man

on the hand-car was saved from being crushed to death by the giant locomotive.

Saved? Yes, by a bullet; for Medway Parker's quick eye saw, from his side of the track, a shot fired; and Lloyd Freeman noted the sudden fall of the tall figure on the hand-car. But Medway Parker was not only quick with his eye; he was an old frontiersman, and his pistol hand was (as his enemies had often remarked) like greased lightning. He took in the whole situation in an instant. The man on the hand-car was killed for warning them of some unseen danger. From Parker's revolver sped a bullet which dealt summary and irrevocable vengeance.

When the train was brought to a standstill, the cow-catcher of the engine touching the little four-wheeled trolley, Lloyd Freeman and Medway Parker gently lifted from the hand-car a dead Indian. It was Young-man-proud-of-his-horses, otherwise 'poor old Slops.'

And by the side of the faithful red-skin they laid the corpse of Mr Demuth, known in the convict settlement of Freemantle, Western Australia, as K. 644, formerly Michael Bibb.

That morning the North Pacific Mail was delayed two hours, while Parker, with some Indian help, relaid seven or eight rails that had been removed from the Shawmut Trestle.

GERMAN FOLKLORE.

It is fitting to begin the roll-call of superstitions with one connected with the first of the year. The dreams of New-year's Night, Hausfraus will tell you, invariably come true. A similar property is accorded to the first night's dream in a strange house; this, it is said, is sure to come true, no matter how preposterous and improbable it may appear to be. If the child in the cradle laughs in its sleep, the mother's heart is gladdened by the thought that angels are whispering to it. If a tempest is brewing, she shudders, and prays for the poor distracted soul that has just died by its own hand. If a star falls, she sighs for those who loved the dead man or woman; and when scientists rejoice over the discovery of a new star, she only has tears for the bereaved mother whose lost child the star represents. She checks the heedless girl who would rock the cradle empty, ignorant that thereby she rocks the baby's rest away. She watches heedfully lest the tears of the mourners should fall on the dead man in the coffin and make him restless in the grave; and she chides the children who would eat off one plate, careless that by so doing they will become enemies for life.

When the sky darkens, she is wise enough to know a babe has been born that will be a scourge to itself and its neighbours; and she is heedful not to point upwards, lest she should destroy the rainbow, or lay knives edge uppermost on the table—for they would cut the angels' feet—or neglect to knock at the wine-casks when there is a death in the house, for such neglect would turn the good wine sour. She shuns the neighbour who spins on Saturday night, for she will walk after her death; and the neighbours

who sew on Sunday and on Good-Friday, for they will be struck by lightning. She mutters the Paternoster when she watches a shooting-star; crushes empty egg-shells lest witches should get into them; and refrains from looking in the mirror at night lest the Prince of Darkness should glance over her shoulder.

If she is born on a Sunday she can see ghosts, and is quite untroubled by the gift. She is learned in weather-lore, and knows that rain on St John's Day will spoil the nuts; that cold April gives bread and wine; that the moon's change on a Friday betokens storm; and that wheat sown on St Maurice's Day will be blighted. If she is curious to know what will happen during the year, she creeps into the winter corn on Christmas Eve and hears the future revealed.

If she has many troubles, she wears a girdle of mugwort on St John's Eve, and afterwards flings it into the fire, trusting that as it burns her griefs will wane and disappear. When the wind blows the long grass about, she calls the children about her, lest they should stray away and come upon the corn-wolf, whose stealthy passage makes the grass sway thus. She forbids them to pull the roses, which are under the protection of Laurin, king of the dwarfs; or to sleep under an elder-bush, or even to pluck its white flowers, lest they should offend the petulant Elder Mother. On winter nights, while she spins, she tells her lads and lasses of Holda, who sails her silver boat across the dark skies by night; and of the moss-women whom the Wild Huntsman pursues during storms; and of certain flowers which once were men and women: how the plantain was a girl deserted by her lover, who used to wait by the wayside for him: how the maple was a village beauty who loved a soldier not wisely but too well, and was cursed by her mother: how the camomile flowers were turbulent and rapacious soldiers, changed after death into this shape for their sins: how dead babies ascend to heaven crowned with strawberry flowers: and how crumbs of rye-bread placed on the saddle of a tired horse will remove his fatigue.

That a red mouse is an emblem of the soul, every German knows; and my typical woman is not likely to ignore, any more than she is to forget the story of the old woman who became a woodpecker, or the way to ensure plenty of chickens; that is, to set the hen to hatch when the worshippers are leaving church. She knows that every slain swallow makes a month of heavy rain; that sparrows' nests on the roof bring riches, and a stork's, long life; and that lightning strikes where the redstart builds; as well as she knows that oaks are the chosen homes of fairies; that demons dwell in old cherry-trees; that the 'undines' hide from mortal eyes in the cups of water-lilies; and that flax and its spinners are under the peculiar care of the goddess Holda.

If a hare crosses her path, she turns back, fearing some bad luck. If she witnesses a wedding in the rain, she congratulates the happy couple on coming riches. She welcomes the song of a cricket as a sign of good luck; and leaves her child unchristened as long as she can, that it may have large eyes, for as long as a pair of scissors or a knife is in its cradle, it is safe from the witches. At the christening she selects, if

possible, godparents from three different parishes, that the child may live to be a hundred, and refrains from giving it her name or her husband's lest it should die before them, and checks the flighty young gossips from looking about them in church, for fear the infant should have the unenviable faculty of seeing ghosts. On May-day Eve (Walpurgis Nacht) she draws crosses on her door, that witches may not enter; and persuades her husband to fire his gun over their cornfields before retiring, so that no evil thing may harm the wheat. Thus lives she amid a store of harmless superstitions and dainty fancies.

IN THE GLOAMIN'.

WHY sinks the sun sae slowly doon
Behind the Hill o' Fare?
What restless cantrip's ta'en the moon?
She's up an hour an' mair.
I doubt they're in a plot the twa
To cheat me o' the Gloamin';
Yestreen they've seen me slip awa',
An' ken where I gang roamin'.

The trees bent low their list'ning heads
Around the Loch o' Skene;
The soft wind whispered mang the reeds
As we gaed by yestreen.
The Bee, brushed frae the heather bell,
Hummed loudly at our roamin',
Syne hurried hame in haste to tell
The way we spent the gloamin'.

The Mavis told his mate to hush
An' hearken frae the tree;
The Robin keekit frae a bush
An' thought we didna see.
But now they sing o' what they saw
Whenever we gang roamin';
They pipe the very words an' a'
We whispered in the gloamin'.

The wintry winds may stir the trees,
Clouds hide baith sun an' moon,
An' early frost the Loch may freeze,
An' still the birdies' tune.
The bee a harried bike may mourn,
An' mirk o'ertak the gloamin',
But aye to thee my thoughts will turn
Wherever I gang roamin'.

CHARLES MURRAY.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THROUGH THE NARUTA WHIRLPOOL.

I was at Kobé, in Japan; and because it was Easter, and I could manage to get away for three consecutive days—because, also, the weather was as warm as an English midsummer day, and that I have a lurking idiosyncrasy for sea-trips in spite of *mal de mer* at the least rolling of the water—I decided to accept S—'s invitation to take a trip with him in his launch, the *Lapwing*, down the Inland Sea. The *Lapwing* is a tiny little boat thirty-six feet in length; but she steams seven knots, and has a comfortable little cabin in which four can sleep without disturbing each other. Dimensions as a rule are superfluous; but in the present instance, considering the nature of the trip to be taken, they are of interest.

There are two entrances to the Inland Sea from Kobé—one by way of the Akashi Strait, the route taken by the mail-steamers, and the other through the Naruta Passage, or Whirlpool. We selected the whirlpool, partly because we wished to visit, for journalistic purposes, the charming but unproductive little island of Nomashima, where it was rumoured that two thousand fisher-folk were starving in consequence of a bad season, and chiefly for the excitement attendant on the adventure.

We left Kobé about one o'clock on Good-Friday, and made for Awaji. The weather was delightfully warm, and the water as idle as a painted ocean. We reached Sumoto about six o'clock. A strong pier or breakwater protects the little town from the easterly gales. It lies at the back of an inlet some three hundred yards in length, and is sheltered behind a broad beach, which lies higher than the town itself. The hills surrounding it are precipitous and pine-clad; but every spot available for vegetation has been seized upon. We had not time to land, but made our way to Yura. After an hour's steaming, a break in the land just before reaching the headland jutting on to the Kii channel disclosed the entrance to Yura, a pretty little land-locked har-

bour, with a circular range of hills, forming a natural basin large enough to hold a fleet. Letting our anchor down, we had dinner; after which we held a council of war as to the advisability of proceeding to Nomashima that night. The sky was overcast, the moon, which had just risen, striving vainly to pierce the sullen clouds; and outside could be heard the dull roar of the Pacific. We decided to venture, however, and were soon making for the exit. The tall cliff's narrowed as we approached the exit, and there was light enough to see a massive wall of masonry on the left of the passage. Just before reaching the narrowest part, a giant shadow rose ominously up, and an immense junk bore stealthily and noiselessly down upon us like a spectre, without a light showing, her huge bulk making our tiny craft look exceedingly diminutive, and causing an involuntary shudder at her proximity. This is no uncommon occurrence in Chinese and Japanese waters, and forms one of the great dangers of night navigation.

The sea was smooth, except for a long swell which hardly raised the water, but which broke with a roar along the black line of rocks on shore, making a white stretch of foam visible in the blackness. As we neared our destination for the night the sky cleared, and the moonlight showed us into the little harbour, which was protected by a stone breakwater. Morning broke sullenly, rain falling heavily, and a nasty fog shrouding the shores of Awaji. It looked as if we were in for a blow, and that would mean a few days' stay. So, after making inquiries ashore, and failing to elicit any information as to cases of starvation, we once more got under way.

As we crossed, we could feel the long heave of the Pacific swell, which inshore was foaming with an angry surge. Making for the headland of Shiwo-saki, the wild nature of this part of the Awaji coast was rendered more impressive by the gloomy weather. A curious feature was the way in which villages were perched half-way up cliffs apparently inaccessible from the beach, and only approachable by a winding and difficult path

from inland. Passing the point, we came into full view of the bare-beaten shores of Hama-nohama. The sandhills, piled up for a long distance back from high-water mark, showed too visibly with what tremendous force the waves can break there when urged on by a south-westerly gale. It was certainly a nasty place to be caught in a breeze, and many were the furtive glances we cast at the leaden sky while assuring each other it would clear soon.

At length we came in sight of Fukura, a delightful place, situated on the mouth of a river, the shores of the estuary evincing great fertility, and the town itself almost hidden behind an island covered with pines and maples. But now the clouds broke to the eastward, letting in a burst of sunshine over the islands of Oge-shima and Shimada, and clearly defining the rocky peninsula which jutted from the shore in a narrow rugged line into the notorious Naruta passage. Swarms of fishing-boats crowded the bay, odd narrow boats of great length, and so slight in the beam that a person could hardly sit down in them comfortably even in the middle. How they stand the Pacific roll is a marvel. The occupants were fishing in the strangest fashion. They had lines overboard, and were pulling them up and down with a regular see-saw motion, the lifting being about two to two and a half feet. Now came the question as to whether we should try the Naruta Passage. We had set out with that object in view; but we did not know how the current was setting, for or against us; and when the chart was produced, the observations upon it caused that indefinable sensation which, if not fear, is nearly allied. To understand the nature of the passage, it should be mentioned that it gives the only entrance to the tide from the Pacific. The passage is not more than three hundred yards wide, and is divided into channels by three reefs. Just at these reefs the water is shallow, but immediately beyond, shelves to fifty or sixty fathoms; hence the water outside is often higher than inside; and it pours down like a cataract, forming the whirlpool which in bad weather is so remarkable a sight.

The Admiralty chart of 1876, published under the superintendence of Captain Evans, R.N., has the following observations: 'The tide sweeps through the Naruta Passage in a NW. and SE. direction with great velocity, and the roar of its breakers can be heard for several miles. About an hour before and after change of tide it runs from seven to eight knots an hour; but during the strength of the stream it much exceeds this. At springs there is scarcely any slack-water; but at neaps there is about a quarter of an hour. The passage should not be used except in case of necessity, when it must only be taken in the first and second hours before and after change of stream. In bad weather it should not be attempted, as it then breaks across, and the channel becomes difficult to distinguish.'

Even more fear-inspiring are the remarks by Captain H. C. St John, R.N., in his work entitled *Wild Coasts of Nipon*, published at Edinburgh in 1880. He says: 'The Naruta, or "Whirlpool," between the island of Avadji and Sikok, is very narrow; through here the ebb and flood tide literally falls eight feet in two hundred yards. In passing through in a ship

you feel like rushing to something unknown. Very few people venture to take this channel, and wisely; but from being intimately acquainted with the tides, rocks, and locality generally, I often took it with perfect confidence, in ordinary weather. In fact, after getting within the influence of the rush of the water, you are carried through in safety *nolens volens*. When deer-shooting once on the Sikok side, and passing close to the rocky point which formed the boundary of the pass on that side, we were not a little surprised to see one of our men-of-war approaching from the Inland Sea; but after watching her through in safety, we thought nothing more of her nor of her bold captain, until, meeting him a month afterwards, I found he had hardly recovered from the effects of passing the Naruta.

"Why did you take the channel?" I asked him.

"Because it was recommended on the chart. But you will never catch me there again. As I neared it, I could see nothing but rocks, breakers, and foam; wished myself out of it, and put the helm hard down; but although the ship was going twelve knots through the water, she would not answer the helm a bit. In another moment I was through, and being whirled about among the eddies in the most horrible manner."

"Well," I said, "I rather expect you never went so fast in a ship before?"

"Never," he replied. "Why, I must have been going at least twenty-five knots."

'Another man, the captain of one of the American mail steamers I knew well, took his ship once through the Naruta, and but once. He hardly liked to speak of it; his rudder-chains were carried away when approaching, and the steamer passed the narrows in the most erratic manner, whirling and twisting about entirely at the mercy of the waters, which waters, as I said before, took you through safely enough if you allowed them. After my friend's little adventure, I had the recommendation removed from the charts.'

If such were the experiences of large vessels, how could we hope to fare in so small a boat as ours! Needless to say we approached it anxiously, though the love of danger for its own sake was sufficient to make us attempt it. Gradually we left the fishing-boats behind, and more and more distinct became the crashing of the breakers over the jagged rocks which divided the channel into three distinct parts. All vegetation had left the shore, which simply consisted of blocks of granite. Three groups of rocks divided the channel, the narrowest entrance being on our side, and this was the one S— decided to take. An encouragement to us was the sight of a huge junk, which, hugging the opposite shore, was also making for the passage. There was not a breath of wind; but the monster hull was gliding swiftly and noiselessly through the water, as if impelled by some magic power. More swiftly, and more swiftly still she drew away from us, and going straight for the central channel, rushed through with the speed of an ocean liner. She was going very smoothly until a few yards past the reefs, when suddenly her prow dipped, tilting her stern in the air. Then she veered as if she would turn within her own length, and all the time she was

shaking, rocking, and quivering, as if from the shock of a powerful explosive. Three seconds later she again headed straight, and in less than a minute was careering through the broken waters safely, at a speed her sails would never enable her to attain in the freshest of gales.

In the meantime we had steamed steadily up, and the captain, urging the engine-driver to keep up the highest possible pressure of steam, steered for the current. The treacherous ocean-river was as smooth as a polished mirror, yet we could gradually feel our pace accelerating until we were going much faster than ever the *Lapwing* had sped before. Nearer we drew to the grim rocks standing up on our left like a huge wall, and on our right in a perspective ridge tapering to a point. Over the central reefs the water foamed and hissed, and for the first time we caught sight of a seething mass of broken water beyond. But it was too late to return. Gently, with scarcely a tremor, we reached the line of rocks, and then suddenly experienced the sensation of falling, akin to that which one has in descending in an elevator for the first time. The prow dipped, but not quite to the water's edge; the little craft shook and trembled like an aspen leaf, swerving and swaying at the mercy of the current, and then dashed into the midst of the bubbling, broken, hissing water; but still irresistibly carried forward, she struggled through, and again answering her helm, we got outside the force of the stream, while the junk had forged ahead about three miles. The actual passage, from the time of entering the current to getting through—a distance of nearly a mile—occupied only three minutes.

Once through, we breathed freely, and our cheeks resumed their natural hue. We had a couple of days' steaming between tiny green islands interlaced with winding channels, and entering romantic little harbours and penetrating inlets running for miles parallel with the shore, and such as are only to be found in Japan.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER V.—ISABEL'S LETTER.

ISABEL first considered again the envelope of her letter. It had been, as her uncle Suffield said, redirected twice. It had first gone to the Ladies' College where she taught; thence it had been sent to her lodgings; whence it had been forwarded to her at her uncle's. The significance of these directions and the poverty of the paper on which they were written having been duly pondered, she opened the letter itself. She had seen the handwriting only twice in her life before, and yet it ought to have been familiar to her eyes, for it was her father's. The following is the curious epistle which Isabel read, and which the acute reader will find full of suggestion:

MY DE^r CHILD,—you w^d wonder exceedingly tht you sh^d hear again fr y^r poor, unfort^{ed} father. I h wander^d t round earth ovr (tho', as a teacher o youth, you are aware tht t earth is not a perfect sphere, but flatten^d at t ends o t axis like an orange) 'fr China to Peru' (*vide* any standrd

book o quotat^{ns}) since last I h^d t parent^l delt o writs to you. It w^d achieve no desir^{ble} end to relate to you in det^l my wander^{ss} and adventures, my gains (insignific^t) and my losses (consider^{ble}), my br^t-wing^d hope and my dull-ey^d despair. T fact, howev^r, tht my pres^t address f correspond^{ee} is Mrs Ackland Snow, Tobacconist, Nelson Street, New North Road, N.,—wh, as you may be aware, is contig^{us} to 'Merrie Islington',—must speak to you w an eloque^{ee} all its own. Afr these diverse experie^{ss} (in t main adverse) I am again a miser^{ble} denizen o our modern Babylon. Moreov^r in t humble dwells wre I am at pres^t domicil^d I am detain^d as a kind o person^l pledge f a debt o two-twelve-six. I am permitt^d to go out only to call f lett^{rs} or to post them, and tht under t vigil^t surveill^{ee} o my landlady's son, a sharp London boy who 'has no little handkerchf'—you know t quot^e. I expect nothg as t result o this communicⁿ, as I deserve nothg;—yet if we all h^d our deserts!—? I h t unshakⁿ convicⁿ, howev^r, tht there still resides in y^r bosom some filial regard tords him who, tho' unworthy o t name, cannot but subscribe hims^f—y^r father,

JOHN RAYNOR.

Two or three things were obviously remarkable about this letter: it was written on a half-sheet of paper, which was of as poor quality as that of the envelope; it contained contractions in spelling which suggested that the writer either had, or had had, experience of some walk in journalism; and it expressed sentiments and made statements which very plainly implied that John Raynor was a somewhat shady and shift^y person.

Isabel stood by her dressing-table in the light of the window, and looked meditatively forth into the sun-lit garden while she mechanically folded and folded again the flimsy paper in her hand till it was of the appearance of a pipelight. This was the third letter she had received from her father, and all three were in the same strain. The first came to her four years before, when she was first appointed teacher in the Ladies' College, and she had replied to it with money, and the request that her father would let her see him. That, however, he refused to do; but he begged for more money to go to America and to take up a 'literary appointment' which had been offered him: and that was his second letter. She had answered it as he had desired, with considerable difficulty, and had heard no more until now. The four years which had passed since her father had gone to America had widened considerably not only her knowledge of books, but her understanding also of men and women, so that this third letter appealed as to a different person, and provoked doubts and apprehensions altogether new. The father who thus wrote to her she had not seen since she was five years old, when her mother had died and her aunt had taken charge of her. She had, therefore, but a dim recollection of him—a dull child would probably have had no recollection at all—but such recollection as she had, which had been weakened and clarified by the sight of her uncle, was bewildered by the letter. Her father, as she now recalled him, was much taller than her uncle—but that, she admitted to herself, might be only in the view of a child, to whom all grown-up

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people seem tall—but in other ways he was like her uncle; he was reticent and serious, and seemed severe. He was therefore scarcely the person—it now occurred to her—to write such an epistle as that she now held between her fingers, or as those she had received four years before. Could it be, she asked herself suddenly, that she had been imposed upon by this person, whom she had believed to be her father because he had so represented himself, and because he had recalled certain family matters which she had thought only her father could know? She might, she considered, have her doubt set at rest by showing the letter to either of her uncles and saying, 'Tell me if this be my father's hand or no!' but then she remembered that her uncle George had remarked, when he handed her the letter, that he ought to know 'the fist'—as if he dimly recognised it—and she shrank from making known even to her uncles her father's condition, if this person who had written as her father were her father indeed.

She still hoped he was. For when her father—or this person who was not her father—had first written to her, she had had a waking dream of the kind that was sure to invade a good and generous girl. She had gathered vaguely and at intervals, during her schooltime when she spent her holidays at her uncle's, that her father, if he was not dead, was leading a life of so disreputable a sort that his existence must be ignored. She had not ventured to ask either her aunt or her uncle what his offences were; but her aunt was so severe and even unjust to her on occasion, that she concluded her father's fault must be neither unforgivable nor irremediable. When, therefore, he put himself in communication with her, her heart leaped forth to help and save him. Her impulse was not so much that of a daughter as that of a mother.

Men are slow to recognise—and slower to believe—that the earliest and the most potent affection of a good girl of strong character is maternal. She first expends it upon her dolls, and her younger brothers and sisters—when she has them—and then she lavishes it upon her lover, who is somewhat bewildered by this divine mixture of feeling for himself, until he is husband and father, when the new feeling in his own breast teaches him to understand hers. Isabel's circumstances had dammed up the flow of this kind of affection. She had been too clever in her girlhood and too much occupied with books and duties to be seriously concerned about dolls, and neither her cousins nor her fellow-pupils at school had needed her attentions. It was therefore with all the more overwhelming volume that this maternal feeling rushed towards her father when he made himself known. He had pushed it back again by his refusal to see her and by his flight to America; but again it was seeking vent, now that he was returned and was within reach—if it was indeed he who had written to her. She passionately hoped that it might be he.

As she considered and hoped, she resolved what she would do; for Nature and training had conspired to make her a person of quick decision. She would send some money at once, with a promise to send more in a few days—when, that is, she would be in London, and could observe and discover for herself the person who would

call for it. She would stop him and speak to him. If he were not her father, then all would be at an end; but if he were, then—oh, then!—with what passionate joy would she take him to her heart to tend and comfort him, to strengthen and restore him. It never occurred to her to doubt whether her father, if found, would be worth such wealth of love. For her feeling was of the serene quality of divine mercy, which regards no sinner as beyond hope of redemption.

A tap sounded at her door, and a voice—Euphemia's—said: 'Bell dear, will you be long? Mother wants us to go into town.'

There at once presented was Isabel's desired opportunity. 'I'll put my things on and be down in a moment,' answered she.

When she descended—with her purse and her letter in her pocket—she found that her aunt and her cousin had gone into the regions of the kitchen. Thither she followed them, and came upon both at the back door of the mansion. Her aunt was there a person to behold and consider. The front of her stately figure was arrayed in a large linen apron with a bib, and she was superintending the unloading of a baker's van piled with buns for the children's Whitsuntide 'treat' in the park that day. She had torn open one of the buns, to judge if they were well baked and white within, and to ascertain that they were not too meagrely supplied with currants. She stood eating a morsel and holding the fragments in her hand, while she counted with the baker the fourteen to the dozen which he threw into great baskets waiting to receive them. And Isabel, as she beheld and considered, wondered for the first time whether the prosperity of the house of Suffield was mainly due to the husband or to the wife.

That duty accomplished, her aunt turned to her with a keen but not unkindly look—a look, indeed, which seemed to say: 'There's something wrong; I wish we two understood each other better.' What she actually did say was: 'You're not looking quite yourself, Bell. No bad news, I hope?'

'No, aunt,' answered Isabel. 'It's nothing to speak of. It's only a letter that has been forwarded to me from London.'

'Of course,' said her aunt, somewhat dryly, with the clear significance of 'I knew *that*.' But she added: 'I only hoped you had nothing to really worry you. I don't want to pry into your private concerns.'

'I have no private concerns of any consequence, aunt,' she said with a blush.

'Well,' said her aunt, dismissing the matter, 'I want you and Phemy to go into town—the horses are being put into the landau—and order these things'—producing a list from her pocket—'at our drapers', Wigmore & Kendal. You will see the kind of things they have in stock. You know what I like; and if you see they haven't got the proper things, tell them to get them somewhere else, or to get them made. When all the order is ready, tell them the things are to be sent to that address a week hence—Rutland Gate, London, W.'

'Oh, mother!' exclaimed Euphemia, clasping her hands in ecstasy, 'are we really going to London, then, for the season?'

'Yes, my dear,' said her mother, looking on her with indulgent eye, 'we are going to London. Your father has taken the house and most of the furniture over from the Earl of Padiham.'

'What!' exclaimed Euphemia. 'The Earl of Padiham that lives out here on the moors?'

'To be sure, my dear,' said her mother with a laugh. 'You don't suppose the peerage can contain two Earls of Padiham.'

'What! Isn't it big enough to hold two, mother?'

'Don't be a goose,' said Mrs Suffield with a touch of severity; for she suspected her daughter was inclined to jibe, and she caught a twinkle of amusement passing from her niece's eye. 'Now make haste, both of you. The carriage is waiting, I've no doubt.'

'But,' asked her daughter, 'aren't you going to tell me all about our going to London?'

'Tell you all about it! There's time enough for that before we go. One thing at a time.—Be off now and do your business.' They were hurrying away when she called after them: 'You might call at the office of the *Gazette* on your way back, both of you, and bring Mr Ainsworth along: he is usually there, I think, just before lunch-time, and he's capital at amusing children—almost as good as yourself, Bell.'

Isabel accepted the suggestion with silence. She understood completely the intention of her aunt. She had perceived before to-day that her aunt was ever ready to bring Alan Ainsworth and herself together—a readiness which, while partly due doubtless to the liking her aunt had for the young journalist, was much more due (Isabel believed) to the fact that Mrs Suffield had a loftier ambition for her son than he had for himself.

CHAPTER VI.—ALAN AINSWORTH.

The editorial sanctum of a leading provincial newspaper of these days is almost as unapproachable by the vulgar as that of the *Times* itself. It may be set in quite as imposing a building, and may be the centre of almost as great a spider's web of political 'influence,' 'special' correspondence, and news 'agency' as the journal that boasts the largest circulation in the world: that may be taken for granted without further insistence. The terra-cotta palace inhabited by *The Lancashire Gazette* is reckoned an ornament of one of the finest and busiest streets of the city which claims to be the heart and soul of the County Palatine; and the editor's room is the finest, though not the largest, of all the rooms in that palace.

While Isabel and her cousin were busy with their shopping, about that mid-day hour when the growing young men in the office became wistfully interested in the impassive face of the office clock, a somewhat stoutish and florid gentleman stood on the hearthrug of the editorial room in the attitude which none but its master would have ventured to adopt. His hands were behind him, and his coat-tails were parted, though the grate was empty, and he stood squarely and solidly, bearing a little on his toes as he measured out his utterances, and marking the emphasis of his words with that slight motion of the head which is all the reserved and weighty Englishman permits himself by way of gesture. This

was Frederick Smith, the famous chief of *The Lancashire Gazette*. He was an admirable example of the kind of person ticketed by Carlyle as 'Able Editor,' and he was addressing no casual caller, for no such common mortal would be admitted to his presence. Before him paced irregularly to and fro, making occasional pauses for speech, a tall, spare, and broad-shouldered young man, excited and flushed.

'I think, sir,' said the young man, when they had been talking thus for some time, 'that if a critic must not express his honest convictions, you might as well get a reporter to do his work.'

'You are a young man, Mr Ainsworth,' said the able editor, 'and I say this for your good: it is part of the intolerance of youth to be always wishing to utter its "honest convictions," and it is part of the regret of maturer years to know that the "honest convictions" of youth have been only impatient prejudices. That you will discover before you are as old as I am, and I certainly must ask you in the meantime to tone down the severity of your dramatic notices.'

'If I cannot say, sir,' said Ainsworth, 'what I honestly think and feel about a performance, I had rather not do the theatres at all.'

'Very well, Mr Ainsworth,' said the editor; 'that is a point for yourself alone to decide, though I would advise you not to be rash. I like your work; in other respects it suits me completely, and I should be sorry to lose it. Think it over.'

And the able editor took his right hand from behind him, and held it out for Ainsworth to shake. Ainsworth grasped it, dropped it, and went.

For an apparently impetuous man, Ainsworth descended the stairs soberly and slowly. On the next landing he encountered a fellow-member of the staff of the *Gazette*, a dapper young gentleman, who was reputed the most slashing and redoubtable political writer in the Palatinate. Ainsworth nodded to him, and was about to pass on, when the dapper young man stopped and spoke. 'Capital notice that of yours this morning,' said he, 'of the theatre last night. Splendid bit of criticism—straight and clear.'

'I'm glad you like it,' said Ainsworth.

'Yes; I was glad to see it. The play and the players have been too much cockered up by the London papers, and it's an agreeable change to find a critic in the provinces giving them a slating.—How does the chief like it?' he asked with a thin, sly smile.

'The chief,' answered Ainsworth, with reserve, 'cannot be said to be in love with it.'

'I thought not. Never mind. Bye-bye.'

And the two went their several ways—Ainsworth down into the street, and the dapper young gentleman up into the chief's presence.

When Ainsworth had left the building, he stood a moment in hesitation, and then turned down a side-street as a man resolved upon a certain course. He entered the restaurant where it was his habit to lunch; but, since it was not quite his time for luncheon, and since he felt no pressing demand of hunger—his blood was too much determined to his head for that—he merely stood at the bar to eat a hurried biscuit and drink a glass of soda-and-milk. It was too

early for any of his fellow-journalists and acquaintances to be about, and of that he was glad; for he knew that he must look rather glum and preoccupied, and that if his friends saw him so, he would be beset with worrying questions or gibes. His modest biscuit being consumed, he sallied forth and returned into the main street.

He felt the absolute necessity of doing something: his intense excitement was as the rapid generation of steam, impelling him to locomotion. He must go somewhere; he must walk—walk—to revolve and grind away the grave annoyance and anxiety that troubled him. Where should he go? The town would not do: the pavements were crowded, and the thought of dodging and jostling other foot-passengers was painful to him. While he thus considered, he saw a shining open carriage and pair draw up at the kerb a little way ahead of him. He had a keen eye, and he recognised at once the occupants of the carriage—a regal-looking dark beauty and a fairy-like fair one, both young, and both arrayed in light, summer raiment. They were the daughter and the niece of the excellent Suffield. The tall and stately lady—the niece—descended from the carriage, while the men hurrying by on the pavement cast over their shoulders admiring glances, which Ainsworth resented on her behalf. She stepped into a post-office, over against which the carriage had stopped, and Ainsworth turned away, that he might not be recognised by the other lady, and jumped upon a passing omnibus.

The encounter avoided, he began to think he was a fool for his pains. Why had he shunned a meeting with these ladies, the one of whom he admired as the best read, the most intelligent, and the most beautiful woman he had ever known? Why, except that the trouble which was worrying him drew him away from contact and from speech with friend or acquaintance. The sight of them, however, made him think of his good friend Suffield, and the thought of him suggested a walk in the varied and extensive Holdsworth Park. He had a problem and a corollary to solve, and he resolved on a solitary walk to solve them. The omnibus on which he was riding passed the necessary railway station; so there he descended from the knife-board, and entered and took a ticket for Holdsworth.

(To be continued.)

ABOUT PILCHARDS.

The day was perfect; autumn once again asserted her pre-eminence among the seasons, and appeared—despite a chill north-easter—the one period wherein it is supremely possible to live. I had crossed the ferry near by Hayle Bar to the Towans, a tract of sandhills overgrown with a turf that keeps perennially short and velvet-like, and with the reedy, gray-green spire-grasses. Presently the sandhills gave place to ruder cliffs, and I struggled through a hazel thicket that covers the slope. For a space I turned aside to look at the wishing-well, where pins without number bore witness to the frequency with which the waters had been interrogated in the summer. Finally, I was upon the open waste again, and found the 'huers' (shouters) watching for pilchards at the white house on Carriockgladden. The boats had been a week in pay, and through-

out that period had taken up their allotted positions daily along the cliff. The season for the coming of the fish was now fully arrived; and on the previous day there had been nought but pilchards taken by the drift-boats that went out after mackerel and herring. The shoals abide but a short time within the limits of the bay, and if they be not swiftly encircled within the seine, they pass out westwards—sweeping from the north-east around the bay—and are lost to the fishermen of St Ives. The huers, therefore, scanned the wide bay with unflagging attention; though there was one that found time to discuss with a roaming stranger the mysterious ways of God with man, even while he watched for the appearance of that 'shade upon the waters' which would be the sign of a bank of fish. The wind was unfavourable: it made a turmoil of sand and rotted shale in the shallow water along the shore, and brought to these western shores a part of the red hematite which—coming from the tin mines—perpetually incarnadines a great tract of water along the farther cliffs. These things would render it all the more difficult for the huers to detect the pilchards—should they come—by their colour on the water; and, having in memory the evil chances of recent years, I only pitied them, and the seiners who awaited their signals, as people unfortunate in expecting overmuch.

But in the afternoon, when there was scarce half an hour to dark, there came a sudden cry of 'Hëva!' (Found) from the white house. Instantly the seiners were on the move, rowing their hardest in obedience to the signals of the huers. Each of these held in either hand a couple of iron rings of about a foot in diameter, set crosswise upon a short handle and covered with cloth, so that they formed white balls, easily visible from sea against the background of heather and sad-coloured grass. In the old days, furze-bushes were used for this purpose; and still, though the white balls are universal, you hear them speak of the 'bushes' of the huers. The code of signals is sufficiently simple: to send the boats east, for example, both bushes are held downwards at arm's length on the left (or western) side; then raised at arm's length above the head on the right. A single bush held in the right hand and swung round in the fashion of a wheel means 'Let out the line;' and, finally, to hold both at arm's length in front, swing them downwards and around over the head to the initial position, then raise a foot or so and bring them emphatically down through the same distance, is to give the exciting order, 'Shoot the seine.' The seineboat and the accompanying towboat have parted company; the line of corks begins to appear on the surface as the net is hurriedly shot. The huers are still waving their bushes—for the fish are invisible except from this height, and it is they who steer the boat—and shouting through huge speaking-trumpets instructions which one must be a fisherman to interpret. At last the order is given to close the seine, and the towboat comes up with the stop-net. While this is being let out and fastened, the men in the two boats are shouting and vigorously splashing their oars, intent upon driving the fish into the curve of the seine and away from its unsecured mouth. Meanwhile, the huers take breath, surveying the

operations below. 'Now bloucers!' says one to the other; and immediately there goes forth from the two speaking-trumpets a great cry of 'Bloucers! Bloucers!' which promptly summons the cobbler from his lapstone, the labourer from the fields, the very baker from his shop, to take part on shore in the securing of what the seiners have captured. The seine was shot unusually late on this occasion—had but the fish come earlier there would have been two or three other seines shot—and though the boat came in as soon as the net had been closed, it was dark when the warp reached the shore. This is a great rope, which is taken in hand by the bloucers and hauled up the steep beach, over the loose dry sand, until it can be attached to one or other of the numerous windlasses which you may find about the coast. The one used was situated in a small plateau upon the face of the cliff, some forty yards above the beach. Hither came all the men of the neighbourhood, footing it delicately in the darkness over a narrow ledge sodden with the drainage of the hills, and here and there broken by a recent fall of the land. The oldsters sat together under the cliff at the back of the ledge, talking philosophy. So long has ill-luck dogged them that their first effort was to put aside all natural hopes. 'I don't take no account of it,' said one. 'Nor me,' said another. A third was lighting a pipe; his face showed a Newlyn picture, without the brushmarks and the inevitable lividness. 'I'm got to that pitch,' he said, when he had secured a light, 'I don't put nothin' on it.' But somehow, though they never ignored their duty of hoping nothing, one learned a good deal as to the benefits which might accrue to them if the seine should tuck well upon the morrow. In a little time the second warp was landed to be connected with a second windlass; and by this means the great seine was slowly drawn inwards to such a position that even at high-tide it would still touch the bottom and afford no way of escape to the imprisoned fish. The men worked bravely and with abundant cheerfulness; but at the end of the evening one remembered chiefly this fact—that they were altogether prepared to find the seine near empty when the time came for 'tucking,' and had a dozen reasons for the catastrophe if upon the morrow it should be found to have happened.

All night the seiners watched by the net, a fire burning with cheerful radiance beneath the awning. The morning showed a sea so enveloped in fog that Godrevy lighthouse—a white tower on an island at the bay's eastern extremity—was scarce visible across the water from St Ives; and it was close upon eight o'clock before the cry of 'Heva!' was heard again. Meanwhile, the tuckers had long been at work upon the first capture. Great black pilchard boats, long past other service, were dragged down by teams of four horses from their accustomed resting-place and towed out to the seine. A smaller net—the 'tuck-net'—was let down inside the seine and closed; then it was drawn to the surface. The fish showed presently as a boiling mass of silver; or perhaps they were more like molten tin when they have plunged into it the sodden log whose moisture, escaping, is to drive all impurities to the surface—scum. The up-flung scales and water stood for the

spitting of the metal. The tuckers stood in their black barges, dipping the fish out by the basketful, and tipping them into the bottom of the boat. Each boat contains when full somewhere over thirty hogsheads—say one hundred thousand fish—and yet in a very few minutes the mass of madly-moving silver had risen to the knees of the men, who stood away from the side and levelled it with the edge of an empty basket, while their companions in labour flung more and more into the boat. Over the tuck-net there was a continual flashing of silver scales cast up, for the fish were well-nigh solid in the net. Now and again a stray fish, not yet within the tuck-net, came slowly towards the surface, too bewildered to be any longer susceptible of fear. The water, when the sun shone upon it, showed a clear green spangled with innumerable scales; and at the line of corks which showed the limits of the seine you could see, looking down into the waters, thousands of pilchards lying dead in the folds of the net, like ingots of silver. There was endless shouting both of comradeship and criticism, and above all, the noise of these innumerable fish, struggling in heaps, and in the tuck-net at the surface. Never a boat went by but had a hundred or two dying in its bows; and all around the central group of boats were men of enterprise who fished with long-handled nets for such fish as had died in the close quarters of the seine.

Meanwhile the huers had twice again raised their cry of 'Heva,' and so there were now three great seines in the water before St Ives, in addition to that which was being tucked to the east, by Carrickgladden. Mounting to the hills above the water, one saw how it is that the presence of pilchards in the bay is detected by the huers; for the fish had packed together in the deeper part of the seine, and showed a reddish black, like a sunken reef. At intervals they appeared to be seized with a sudden consciousness of their predicament, and the water boiled at the surface visibly. On the previous day, and even this very morning, when there was light, it had been difficult for the unpractised eye to detect a sign before the net was closed; and, indeed, the desultory talk of the bystanders was largely of historic occasions whereon a seine which had been shot in water deemed by the majority quite innocent of fish, turned out—to the glory of the huer who had seen the shoal—to be magnificently plenished.

It was good, too, to look back through a glass at the tucking of the first seine. The fog had changed to a beautiful azure mist; the sun shone brightly on a pale smooth sea, whose waves were little more than lines of shadow. Seen against the level light, the boats and figures of the men were of a velvety blackness; but the fish, as they struggled in the tuck-net or poured from the baskets into the boats, shone with an exquisite soft silveriness. And there the men laboured until the turn of the tide, when ten great boats, laden to the gunwale, were towed into the harbour, the further tucking of the seine being left until low water on some future day.

Remains to describe the scene in the harbour, whither the barges were towed, that the fish might be conveyed to the cellars and salted. The boats were moored, and the carts backed into the water,

where the horses stood most patiently—though with a certain look of dejection—while the fish were shovelled out. The 'jowsters'—men who retail the fresh fish throughout the neighbouring country—were buying their stock: his own particular business the one thing in all the world to each. As quickly as possible they are off and away again, and in an hour or two every street in every town for miles will be resounding with wild cries of 'Fresh Pilchar', 'Pilchar', 'Pilchar'! while the women will gather bareheaded at the tail of the carts to buy the fish at five, six, seven, or eight a penny; every town a little later will be exceedingly fragrant with the odour of 'scrowlers'—which is to say, fried pilchards.

In the water and upon the gray sands a host of children wandered among their elders, the most of them having each separate finger thrust through the gills of a pilchard. All the tide-mark, also, was strewn with the fish, often near already, by reason of many trampling feet, to a condition of naked skeleton; and a great dogfish, caught and killed yestreen by one of the drift-boats, showed his white belly, rolling with the come and go of small waves: the only impassive thing in all the scene. All the old men of the town were on the sands, uttering conjectures as to the probable number of hogsheds to be taken out of the seines, and enlarging upon the utter worthlessness of the most magnificent captures as prices are in these days. The reason of this falling-off is simple: there is no market, practically, for fresh pilchards; they all go to the cellars, and thence to the Italian markets. Now, in the old time the Italians had to content themselves with Cornish pilchards, or be without fish of any sort; to-day, there is unlimited competition, and even the St Ives man realises that he will not choose 'fairmaids' who can eat his fill of Newfoundland cod. Also, it is said, the Catholic religion loses its hold upon the people in those parts, and they scruple not to taste flesh on Fridays. It is a pity: eaten fresh, the fish is delicious; and there are those that can stomach it when it has been salted. But in neither condition does it find a sale at remunerative prices, though it is possible that, with a railway company resolved to foster, not to hamper and destroy the fishing, St Ives might grow rich by providing cheap fish for the poor of great cities.

The children, however, are bound to profit, and it is by no means the sons and daughters of the poor alone who descend to 'cabin', as they name the practice of stealing fish from the boats or from the carts that convey it to the cellars. One man, manifestly of a temper not too well controlled, was followed at each journey by a score of urchins. Whenever his back was turned for a moment, one of the youngsters would dart forward and with one sweep of his hand send a score of pilchards flying out of the cart. His companions shouted exultantly as they scrambled for a share of the spoil; and the man, divided betwixt the care of his horse and of his load, raved impotently at them, or struck out at some daring girl, who laughed back at him most impudently as she shook the hair from over her eyes. But his strength was spent upon the air, and the fish still came by hundreds out of his cart. Finally, he must mount a steep and narrow lane betwixt two inns of immemorial fame, that

now are annually compelled to find (before the magistrates) excuses for existence. The way was but roughly paven; the fish came by dozens and half-dozens over the tail of the cart, and the children followed tumultuous, caving now without fear of the driver's lash. When the ascent was made and the driver was at liberty to descend, they were already on their way to the beach again, looking for some new chance of plunder.

There the labour of unloading ceases not, and already they are preparing for fresh ventures, if the fish come again. The thing has in it, surely, the stuff of a picture worth painting, and for decorative quality alone surpasses that frieze of camels whereof so much has been said. Down the gray granite quay, against the bluest of skies, march five-and-thirty tall and resolute fishermen in yellow oilers and great sea-boots. Each walks some three or four yards behind his leader; they bear upon their shoulders a great brown seine, which hangs in regular festoons between them. They are taking it from the cellar to their boat.

Night comes; the bay is filled with lights; and presently the drift-boats come back—their nets all empty—and their owners mingle with the rest. And thus by night and day life takes its course with infinite picturesqueness in the little town, until, at the end of a week, nineteen hundred hogsheds of fish have been landed, and the seines are taken up. And indeed it is good to have shared this life, though merely as a spectator. For though the capitalist has possessed himself of the chief profits of this harvest, as of all others, the event is still for the good of all. For every hoghead of fish which has been taken, the bloucers will divide the sum of two shillings and tenpence between them; and the seiners and tuckers are paid good wages. There is no dweller in the neighbourhood that does not somehow share in the harvest of the sea; and for twenty miles you will hardly find a cottage which has not its store of pilchards, purchased at any price from a shilling a hundred, and now put by in salt for winter use. And, to conclude, these fishermen are of Nature's gentlefolk, and to have moved among them for a space is to have learned a lesson: of courtesy certainly, and perhaps also of patience.

H. D. LOWRY.

ISABEL DYSART.*

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT a strange interruption of the tranquil composure of the little retired country-house would that have been which might have occurred at Wallyford when Isabel walked into it all flaming and throbbing from this encounter, if the atmosphere and the still walls had taken notice of any such things! But they do not, happily for the human creatures who breathe in and inhabit them. The quiet house, and Jenny in the kitchen occupied with her scones, and Mrs Dysart in the drawing-room, who was just turning the heel of her stocking and absorbed in that operation, received Isabel quite unconsciously, without any disturbance in their calm, as if she had come from the prayer-meeting at Inveresk Kirk. It is true that after she had counted her stitches and got that momentous corner right to

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go on with, Mrs Dysart looked up and cried: 'Bless me, Isabel! what a colour you have gotten,' pushing up her spectacles to see the better.

'Yes, mother,' said Isabel; 'I have run almost all the way from Uncle John's.'

'There seems a great charm about Uncle John's,' said her mother; 'it seems to me you are always there.'

'They look out for me passing, and stand at the window and cry on me,' said Isabel; 'but there was a reason to-day; for here's a paper they've sent you, mother, with all the news of that—that terrible thing in Edinburgh.' Isabel held out the paper, turning her head from the light, that the commentary of her agitated face might not be seen.

'Bless me!' cried Mrs Dysart, putting down her stocking. 'But it'll be yesterday's paper: this is not one of the days for the *Courant*.'

'It's a special edition,' said Isabel under her breath; and 'Bless me!' said Mrs Dysart again. 'It's not a small matter they'll print the *Courant* for out of its usual. It'll be something great that has happened.' She paused a moment to add: 'Set John Dysart up with his paper every day! The *Scotsman* is good enough for me.'

Isabel stood for a moment behind, watching her mother draw the nearest candle to her and spread out the paper. The small but clear light shone on Mrs Dysart's eager face, lit up with keen curiosity, and on her white cap and the white kerchief at her throat, and the little thrill in her head and her whole person, of that desire to know which is so strong in the rural quiet. Isabel thought, half indignantly, that her mother would read all that had happened in the papers, but would not, could not, read what had passed in her, Isabel, standing close to her chair. And yet how much more important was the last to both of them! She stole away in the dark once more to her own room to take off her 'things,' and to bathe her face after that habit she had, which Mrs Dysart thought so foolish, coming in from the cold air. She had forgotten all about that spot on her cheek that had so burned and stung the evening before. The greater incident had obliterated the less. But she did not venture to pause in the darkness to think. The current was running too strongly in her veins. She stopped for a moment at the window and looked up at that star which seemed to know all about her, staring so earnestly as if its steady little ray went straight into her heart. She went back to the drawing-room immediately, subduing herself as well as she could, anxious to hear, yet with a feeling that she knew far, far more than could ever be in any paper. Her mother looked up quickly at the sound of the opening door.

'Here is terrible news indeed,' she said with an awe-stricken face. Then quickly changing her tone: 'Isabel, will you never get over that silly trick with the cold water? Your face is just burning like the kitchen fire.'

'I'll try and mind another time,' said the girl, with unusual humility; for indeed it was a great relief to hear so simple a reason for the blaze of excitement on her cheeks. 'But what is the terrible news? They were all speaking of it, all together, and I was not attending. I cannot bear to hear about murders and such things.'

'But this is worse than murder,' said Mrs

Dysart solemnly. 'Oh, Isabel, my heart misgave me! The very way he turned it off when I named the Assistant might have told me. But then I never knew what Professor it was that was implicated. Oh, Isabel, my bonnie woman! I hope, I hope you'll not take it to heart. They say the Assistant was most to blame; and who do you think the Assistant was? Lord bless us! what things there are in this world that nobody would guess; but Bell, my dear, he's not worthy, he's not worthy! Who do you think the Assistant was?'

Isabel raised her head and looked her mother in the face. She had never in her life looked so bonnie, Mrs Dysart thought. Her eyes were shining like two stars, but there was anger and impatience, not wonder or despair, in their look.

'I know very well,' she said almost fiercely, 'who Dr Stokes Assistant was.'

'My bonnie woman!' was all Mrs Dysart could reply.

'And of course,' cried Isabel, 'they will put it all on him. But why was he to be wiser than his master? If he was the Assistant, he was not the great, great man. They'll break the Doctor's windows, but they'll be wanting the Assistant's life. It is just the way of the world.'

'Oh, my dear,' cried Mrs Dysart, 'how does a lassie like you know the way of the world? You must not speak like that, as if you were full of experience.' She added after a moment: 'Would you not like to hear what the paper says?'

'I care nothing about the paper,' cried Isabel. 'I know more than the paper. Mother, I've seen Willie Torrence. He's away to London—with a great opening and everything before him. And he says he'll be "Sir William" before all's done. And he wants me to go too.'

'The Lord forbid! The Lord forbid! Oh, not that, not that, Isabel; not a man like that!' cried Mrs Dysart, flinging up her arms in appeal to earth and heaven.

Isabel made no reply. She cared nothing now for the burning in her face, for the trembling of her hands, or that she had betrayed herself, and the tremendous ordeal she had just come through. The encounter with such great passions and unknown forces penetrated the girl's slight frame, so that every nerve and every thought was affected. What her mother thought of was that her child loved this man, and was going to fling her fresh and innocent life into the turbid flood of his; or perhaps meant to do that for sheer pity and the passion of self-sacrifice, which is like a fever in young veins.

'Isabel!' she said, 'O God forgive me, you'll think I was always against him; but it's not that now. Isabel! my darling, I'll not say a word. But promise me you will take time to think. You'll do nothing in a moment, nothing rash to bind you for your life. Think how young you are, and what a long, long time you have before you—to repent in, if you take a wrong step just in a rush of feeling—now!'

'Will you let me see, mother,' said Isabel in a constrained voice, 'what the paper says?'

But she could scarcely read the printed words. She knew—oh, much more, how much more! And she did not know what to say, how to answer her mother, who thought perhaps better

of her than she deserved; who thought that she was going to stand by him in his trouble, to be his defender and his consoler, and take that proverbial traditional part of the woman, rallying to the man at his worst, helping him to carry through! Oh, but Isabel was not that woman! and she was ashamed by her mother's instinctive certainty that she was. It would have been a finer, a far finer part, she believed, to play; the instincts of the girl would almost have vanquished her better sense had her excitement and agitation not been so great. She might have made that sacrifice in the rush, not of love, but of the quick sense that it was expected of her, had she not been so shaken by the encounter in the dark with that bold spirit, undismayed and unrepentant, like some great magnetic machine clearing, over everything that lay before it, its own blind determined way.

In the morning early, before the usual time of visitors, some one came to the front door of Wallyford, the door that was never used. Both mother and daughter were still so full of excitement, that the sound of the knocker went through them both as if it had been a summons of death. Mrs Dysart said afterwards that she thought nothing less than that it must be the 'pollis'-officers come there to look for *him*; they would not have found him at his mother's, and they would hear that he was often at Wallyford, and this would be them. What Isabel thought has never been disclosed; but she grew very pale, and stood stricken dumb in the middle of the room which she had been crossing to her seat in the window. 'Who will that be? God bless us! who will that be?' said Mrs Dysart. But Isabel never spoke a word. It was too much for her. She put her hand to her throat, as if she could not get her breath.

Both the ladies felt that instantaneous relief which perhaps is the most potential sensation of ease and comfort in existence, when the door opened and Mr Murray came in. Mrs Dysart gave a little laugh to herself in the sense of recovered life and satisfaction. 'Come away, Mr Murray,' she said. 'You gave us a fright with your knock at the big door. Most folk that know us well come round by the back door—Jenny's way, as we call it. I am just as glad to see you as the flowers in May.'

'Because I am nothing worse than James Murray,' he said.

'Oh, worse! Mr Murray, you're just joking—there could be nobody better,' said Mrs Dysart. 'Take a seat and tell us all your news. It's a long time since we have seen you here.'

This was not true, indeed, since he had been there the previous day; but in the trouble of her mind Mrs Dysart was not quite sure what she said.

'I am a bearer of tidings now,' he said with a little heightening of his colour. He was very fair, and had a transparent complexion which rose and fell like a girl's. 'I would not have come so early but that I have news. I went in to Edinburgh last night, thinking I might perhaps be of use; and I thought you would be glad to hear.'

'I'm sure it is very kind of you, and done with a most excellent intention,' said Mrs Dysart with dignity; 'but there is no news from Edin-

burgh, I think, that is of that importance to Isabel and me.'

'No?' he said doubtfully, looking from one to another, with a sudden sensation of being stopped short.

'There are none of our family settled there,' said Mrs Dysart. 'I have a daughter married in Glasgow, and one in the Highlands, and one'—

'Mother,' said Isabel, 'will you let the minister speak?' She was sitting very upright, with two red spots upon her cheeks, and her eyes fixed on that messenger of fate.

'Oh, speak by all means,' cried Mrs Dysart with a faint laugh. 'Isabel is always set on the news—whatever it is,' she added nervously.

Mr Murray snatched a glance at Isabel, sitting with her hands clasped tightly and those two red spots upon her cheeks. He said to himself bitterly: 'She can feel like that for him, while I'— And then he began his tale.

'There was something very like a riot in Edinburgh last night: there has not been so much excitement, they say, for many a year. Dr Stokes did not venture to budge from his house. If he had been seen, he would have been torn in pieces, I believe. The populace is a terrible thing. It's like a wild beast licking its bloody paws.'

He was silent a little after this metaphor, half because of his own excitement, half to witness its effect on his hearers. They rewarded him by that long-drawn breath and shiver of attention which an orator loves.

'There was one that they were harder upon still. And that was—the Assistant, Mrs Dysart. When somebody suggested his name, there was a roar—like savage beasts. The Doctor himself might have been suffered; but him, the other one, they would have rended limb from limb. I was in great terror for—for Torrence, Mrs Dysart. One of our own parish, and—and—and—a man with like passions'—Mr Murray choked a little, and then went on—'a man in many things more fortunate and—gifted than any of us—a man that—I thought it would be a good thing to be there, and perhaps be able to do something for him, or lend a helping hand.'

'Eh, Mr Murray!' said Mrs Dysart with a half-sob.

'You will perhaps think I am making too much of it—but it was a serious moment, a very serious moment. I stayed till it was quite late, and a shower came on, and the people dispersed. Every night that passes is something gained in a kind of natural tumult like that. At last, by God's providence, I met Torrence, Mrs Dysart: and what a thing that it was me, and not some person with an ill meaning that had just to cry his name and get up a crowd in a moment. It was very wet in Edinburgh last night. I made him take my big cloak that I had on my shoulder, and wrap it well round his chin and his mouth. And I walked with him myself to Leith, and saw him safe in the London smack. He has a great deal of courage. He would have faced them all, if I had not held him to his resolution. I saw him safe in the London smack, and stayed till she sailed at five in the morning with a good wind, and the

dawn just beginning to break.—And I thought, he said after a pause, with a break of excitement in his voice, 'that you and Miss Isabel, being old friends, would like to know he was quite safe—and in good spirits, considering all.'

Mrs Dysart was crying quietly, overcome by sympathetic emotion, derived rather from the minister's strained voice and flushed cheek than from anxiety or grief. 'Eh,' she cried, only half articulate—'a friend—that sticketh closer than a brother.'

He lifted up his hand quickly. 'I'm not that kind of friend—I'm not that kind of friend. That's true of One that is the Friend of us all. It was because I thought that to hear of him safe might be—a relief to your minds.'

And then there was a moment of intense silence in the room. It was broken by Isabel saying steadily: 'He will never come to Edinburgh more!'

'Oh,' cried the generous minister, 'do not say that either! It will blow over. When passion's worn out, reason comes in. There are no doubt many circumstances—that we haven't heard. And things will be explained. And if you come to that, Miss Isabel,' he added with a faint smile, 'there are other skies than Edinburgh, and other places—if none so fair. And if a man has—them that are faithful to him—to hold by him through all'—

Isabel rose quickly to her feet. 'There will be one that will be faithful to him, and that will be his mother,' she said. 'I hope you went first to her before you came to my mother and me?'

'I—I don't know that I thought of her,' the minister stammered, like a guilty man.

'And you came to us that were strangers to him! Oh yes, we know Willie Torrence well, since we were bairns together. But no more than that. And her that is his mother—his mother! Did you think what that means? You did wrong in that.'

'Isabel, Isabel! And how much more wrong are you, to be ungrateful for the minister's great kindness—all done to relieve our minds.—Oh, you are not to take any notice of what an impatient lassie says! I am truly grateful to you, Mr Murray,' Mrs Dysart cried, 'and so will she be when she comes to herself.'

'Miss Isabel is very right,' said the young minister. 'I am well reprov'd—I see I took a great deal upon myself in thinking—while it's true the mother's the first person, and no doubt about what must be in her mind.'

'The mother is just an auld fool,' Mrs Dysart said, drying her eyes.

'That was too much my opinion,' said Mr Murray, going meekly away.

There was not a word said between them as Mrs Dysart, not Isabel, saw him to the front door, and solemnly closed it upon him when he was gone. He went away shamefaced to the mother, whom he had not thought of, with his news; and she returned almost abashed to the ungrateful girl who had not appreciated his kindness. She found that ungrateful girl sobbing upon the shoulder of the old sofa with her face hidden upon it.

'Oh, I'm glad he's away,' Isabel cried.—'I'm glad he's safe away! And he'll get the grand house and the carriage that he promised me, and

he'll be Sir William before he dies. But it's not me that is the faithful woman to stand by him. Oh, you may scorn at me, or you may scold at me, mother! I'm not good enough for that: but I'm too good for Willie Torrence. And that is all that I have to say.'

It was a great surprise, and perhaps a little shock, and yet an unspeakable relief to Isabel's mother. She would have almost liked her daughter to be that faithful woman—though that she should have been Torrence's wife would have filled her with despair.

The excitement blew over, the tumult ceased, the Professor resumed his classes. How far the suspicions of the populace were true or false, who could tell? Some people thought young Torrence had been made the scapegoat, and that if there was blame, it was the master first who ought to have borne the blame. And I believe he did bear it in a life-long prejudice and sentiment of popular dislike, if in no other way. As for Torrence, nothing of the kind could subdue him. He shook off the prejudice as he did the guilt, if there was any, from the buoyant shoulders of a man born to rise in the world. How far he regretted Isabel Dysart I am unable to say. But he was 'Sir William' before he died.

And all Musselburgh was glad in a neighbourly way when it was known, not very long after, that Mrs Dysart's last daughter was to settle so near her as at the Mause. One in Glasgow, and one in the Highlands, and one—

'But Isabel, the Lord be thanked,' said Uncle John and Aunt Mary, 'just a mile or two away.'

THE END.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A FELLOW of the Zoological Society has recently called attention to the fact that the African elephant is inevitably destined to become extinct if ivory traders are not stopped in their work of wholesale destruction of the animal. He points out that this destruction is in reality needless, for the tusks, for possession of which the animal is killed, being solid, can be cut off with a proper saw without pain to their owner. He further says: 'It seems to me that the ivory traders would gain time, save labour, and avoid the criminal folly of exterminating their source of revenue, if they could be induced to resort to this more humane method of obtaining ivory, instead of to the unnecessary and brutal butchery of vast herds of valuable, inoffensive, and tractable animals, which takes place year by year.' The capture of the animal and the removal of its tusks would naturally present difficulties, but these are not insurmountable, and might be disregarded in consideration of the beneficial results which such a course would entail.

Some one has found out that the metal aluminium will leave a mark on a slate, and from this observation has sprung a company in Germany for the supply of aluminium slate pencils. These pencils will be inexhaustible and unbreakable, and will require no pointing, while the

marks which they make can be easily erased with a wet sponge. Another use for the cheapened metal is found in the manufacture of tobacco pipes, the bowls of which are lined with meerschbaum. Such a pipe is said to be much lighter than one of similar bulk made of briar root.

A recent and most potent implement of warfare is represented by the Gathmann Torpedo, which is both aerial and subaquatic in its nature—that is to say, when fired from a special form of gun designed for it, it will travel arrow-like through the air; and should it strike water, its course will be continued in the same direction slightly below the surface. The torpedo is the shape of a cedar pencil, with the addition of wings, which aid it in its flight, and a propeller at its rear end, which is worked by mechanism within the body of the contrivance. It therefore has a source of motive-power besides that conferred upon it by the gun from which it is fired. A twelve-inch torpedo, having a length of ten feet, will carry more than three hundred-weight of one of the high explosives, and is said to have a range of several miles.

Some time has elapsed since any balloon ascents have been made for strictly scientific purposes, and the feat accomplished by Messrs Glaisher and Coxwell in 1862, when a height of twenty-nine thousand feet above the level of the sea was recorded by their barometer, has never been excelled. M. Hermite has during the past summer constructed several ingenious self-recording instruments for scientific investigation of the upper regions of the atmosphere by means of balloons; and many of these balloons, which are of small size and carry no passengers, have been sent up from Paris, and have fallen sometimes as far away from the city as two hundred miles. These balloons and their attached instruments are returned to their proprietor in obedience to instructions, printed on an attached card. One of these little balloons lately reached—according to the barometer it carried—to a height of thirty thousand feet; and M. Hermite believes that with a balloon which he is now constructing he can reach to a point nearly ten thousand feet higher.

The occurrence last winter of shipwrecks on our shores, proving unfortunately in a very sad manner the inadequacy of present life-saving appliances, moved the proprietors of one of the London papers to offer a prize of one hundred pounds for a life-saving apparatus which should fulfil certain conditions, one of the principal of which was that by its connection might be made from ship to shore without aid from any one on land. The result of this offer was the presentation of more than two thousand schemes. That which, in the opinion of the judges, was the best contrivance sent in, was devised by Messrs Thompson & Noble of Southampton. It consists of a rocket head, which directly it touches earth expands into the form of a powerful grapnel. One of its chief recommendations is that it can be adapted to the rocket apparatus now in use. The judges conclude their Report on this interesting competition by stating that they believe that if properly conducted experiments were

authorised, a still more satisfactory rocket and grapnel would be evolved. 'We do not think,' they write, 'that finality is yet nearly reached.'

At a recent meeting of the Royal United Service Institution (London), Captain G. S. Macilwaine read a paper on the Ventilation of Ships, in the course of which he urged the importance of fixing a standard of air supply for men and beasts, so that proper ventilating apparatus should be considered a matter of first necessity. He also impressed upon commanding officers the sanitary value of cleanliness among the men, and the constant airing of both bedding and clothes. Various methods of ventilation were described.

The Arcas process of electro-silvering, which is now being worked by a company in London, is said to give a harder and therefore more durable coating of the metal than can be deposited under the older system. It consists in associating with the silver a certain proportion of cadmium. The latter metal is *per se* softer than silver; but the mixture follows the rule with regard to many other alloys in producing a compound which differs in physical qualities from its components. The Arcas process is said to give a coating which does not differ in appearance from one of pure silver, while at the same time it tarnishes less easily, can be more readily cleaned, and adheres with greater tenacity to the metal upon which it is electrically deposited. It is somewhat cheaper, too, than the older method.

The old illusory device known as the Wheel of Life, or Zoetrope, in which a number of figures, changing rapidly before the eye, give the idea of movement, has entered upon a new lease of popularity since it was found possible to replace the rough drawings previously used by photographs taken from living beings. By the photographic apparatus devised by Anchtütz of Berlin, it is possible to take two dozen different pictures of a horseman while in the act of leaping over a hedge, each picture describing a particular portion of his flight. When these photographs are placed in the Zoetrope, the horse and his rider appear instinct with life. Apparatus for showing various moving pictures of this kind, to be set in motion on the penny-in-the-slot principle, are now to be seen in the German capital, and will presently be introduced into Britain. We have recently seen the apparatus in action, and can vouch for its efficiency.

A great extension of electric lighting in private houses may be looked for by the expiry of the patents which refer to the incandescent or glow-lamp system. This will happen, we believe, in about eighteen months' time, and prospective users of this beautiful form of illumination will do well to content themselves with their old lamps for the time being. The cost of renewing a glow-lamp—and their tenure of life is quite uncertain—is at present about four shillings and sixpence. When the patents run out, it is believed that this sum will be reduced to about one shilling, for the cost of making a lamp of this description is below that sum.

In a United States Consular Report appears a statement with regard to the production in England of oil of sweet almonds. It is there stated that the trade is carried on principally, if not only, by two London firms, and that the

method of manufacture is to crush the kernels by hydraulic pressure, and to distil oil from the cake so formed. It is also stated that a similar industry is carried on at Havre, where a cheaper and inferior oil is produced from peach kernels.

Our agricultural readers will do well to note the fact that an official recipe for the compounding of *Bouillie Bordelaise*, which has proved such an effective specific for potato blight, appears in a recent number of the *Kew Bulletin*. As this paper is not readily accessible, we reproduce the directions for its preparation: Forty-five pounds of copper sulphate (blue stone) are enclosed in a bag of coarse canvas, and suspended in a vessel of water (two hundred and twenty gallons). In a separate vessel, twenty-two and a half pounds of quicklime are slaked by added water, and are passed through a sieve into the copper solution. This quantity of the mixture is sufficient for one acre of land.

Some idea of the vast area of the World's Fair buildings at Chicago may be gleaned from the arrangements adopted for painting them. It was found that even if a large army of brushworkers were employed in the ordinary manner, it would be quite impossible to complete the work in time; so human handiwork has been dispensed with, and an ingenious machine has been constructed with the most satisfactory results. This consists of a gas-pipe, flattened at one end so as to form a spray producer, and it is connected with an air-pump driven by an electric motor, and a barrel of liquid paint. By this contrivance the paint is sucked up from the barrel and discharged in a cloud on the surface to be coloured, and by its aid a handful of workmen are able to get over more space in a day than ten times their number could accomplish in a week under ordinary conditions.

The Berlin police have adopted a common-sense method of dealing with persons who advertise harmful and poisonous preparations for sale, which has the merit of not putting in motion the tardy and uncertain machinery of the law. Immediately beneath the objectionable advertisement they publish the announcement that the preparation above named has been analysed, and is found to consist of such and such a composition, its intrinsic value being so much. In this way lately was stopped the sale of a much-advertised cosmetic, the chief component of which was that deadly salt of mercury known as corrosive sublimate.

The inhalation of pure oxygen has proved such a valuable remedy in certain acute stages of disease, and has been so highly spoken of by leading members of the medical profession, that Brin's Oxygen Company—who, it will be remembered, obtain the gas direct from the atmosphere, and can therefore guarantee perfect freedom from chemical contamination—have made arrangements by which a cylinder of compressed gas can be obtained at their works at any hour of the day or night.

Winter has brought the usual protests against, and proposals for the annihilation of fog, to be forgotten for another twelve months as soon as the buds shall begin to show under the more genial skies of spring. It is the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society which has been the first to complain, on the

ground that as London fogs are causes of inconvenience and loss to horticultural interests within the metropolitan area, their chemical composition, amount of sulphurous acid which they carry, and their nature and extent, should be investigated, and they invite the co-operation of other Societies in the work. It is also suggested that the London Council should tackle the fog question in addition to its other multifarious duties. Such an investigation can do but little good, for the causes of these fogs are already well known, and their composition is very apparent to persons possessed of the senses of seeing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. If the Committee can invent and cause to be adopted a smokeless fireplace, they will cure the evil. There is no other effective remedy.

An interesting account of the Camphor Industry of Japan is contained in a Report by the United States Council at Osaka, which is reprinted in the *Board of Trade Journal*. The camphor tree, a species of laurel, is often of an enormous size, and is of very handsome growth. By a stringent law, any one which is cut down for camphor-making must be at once replaced by a sapling. The wood is cut into chips, which are steamed in a wooden vessel placed over a pot of boiling water, the steam, carrying the oil and camphor, being led by a bamboo pipe to other vessels. By means of this rough still, the oil and crystals of camphor are separated from one another—the former being used by the natives for illuminating and other purposes; while the latter is packed in tubs, holding more than one hundred pounds each, ready for market. There are three qualities of camphor, depending upon the amount of adulteration to which they have been subjected, which consists of the addition of as much oil and water as the buyer will tolerate. Camphor wood has a close grain, and is much valued both for shipbuilding and cabinet-making.

It would seem that the anti-fouling compound or paint available to our naval authorities must belie its name, for from the bottom of Her Majesty's ship *Northampton*, the flagship at the Nore, fifty tons of barnacles have recently been removed. It was remarked during the late naval manoeuvres that this vessel would only steam at about a quarter her normal speed, and now the reason of her sluggishness is apparent.

A new material, which may be described as concrete having a basis of wood instead of stone, is being made in Germany principally from waste products. These consist of wood shavings, sawdust, and chips, combined with lime, glycerine, sodium silicate, and linseed oil. This mortar is pressed in moulds, and left until hard and dry, when it can be turned, sawn, planed, polished, and treated in every way as if it were a close-grained wood.

Those who live in the near neighbourhood of large railway stations know to their cost how the fog signals go on exploding without intermission in thick weather. One railway company uses in a single district about six thousand of these miniature torpedoes during the winter season; their manufacture indeed represents an important industry, carried on chiefly at Greenwich and Birmingham. The fog detonator consists of a waterproof tin box containing a charge of gunpowder and three percussion caps. It is fastened

to the rail by means of lead clips, and pressure of the engine-wheel causes it to explode.

The British Vice-consul at Nicolaieff reports that a Society is being formed in Russia with a view to promote the production of silk in that province. The soil and climate are both admirably adapted for the growth of the mulberry tree, which flourishes wherever it is planted; and it is stated that there are many available tracts of ground now covered with weeds which could be usefully planted with these trees. The Society will endeavour to interest the peasants and poor classes in the matter, and they have every hope of being able in this way to lay the foundation of what may prove to be a large and flourishing industry.

Three very remarkable photographs of Swift's comet were lately taken by Professor Barnard at the Lick Observatory. The pictures were taken at intervals of about twenty-four hours, and it is quite astonishing to notice the changes the comet has undergone in this short interval of time. In each picture the surrounding stars are represented by short white lines parallel to the comet's motion, for the instrument employed in taking it was necessarily made to follow the path of the comet, and not the apparent motion of the stars. Professor Barnard regards these pictures as a revelation, and says that if they 'had been drawn by the most competent observer, most astronomers would probably have attributed their remarkable differences to the unskilful hand of the artist, for there is absolutely no resemblance among them.' This eminent astronomer also believes that the pictures—which, by the way, have been reproduced by our contemporary *Knowledge*—afford some evidence of the possible rotation of the tail of the comet, and this new feature is one to be looked for and determined in future observations.

A renewed outcry has been made about what is called the 'advertising plague,' by which is meant the exhibition in our streets, railway stations, and other public places of advertisements referring to all sorts of commodities. Those who have initiated this protest against what is a very important item in commerce, would do well to confine their objections to the nature of some of the pictorial advertisements rather than to their summary extinction. Some of the productions which we see posted about our streets are certainly most objectionable and inartistic; while others, it must be admitted, are really works of art, which have an educational value. It would be well if some controlling authority were appointed to say what should and what should not appear on a street hoarding; and we should certainly rejoice if the same official were to prevent railway companies from hiding the names of their stations amid similarly lettered labels of mustard, soap, coals, &c. The proverbial needle in a bundle of hay is far easier to find than the name of a railway station among the groceries, &c., with which it is commonly mixed up.

The recent death of Lord Romilly from a lamp accident has again drawn public attention to the unsatisfactory character of the petroleum in common use. A paper read at the last meeting of the Society of Chemical Industry in Glasgow pointed out that Government per-

mitted oil which will explode at a temperature of seventy-three degrees Fahrenheit to be sold to the public; while for use by its own servants it will not accept any oil giving off inflammable vapour under one hundred and five degrees Fahrenheit. If our intelligent Government servants are not sufficiently protected unless they have an oil which will not flash under one hundred and five degrees Fahrenheit, how, it is asked, are the ignorant poor, who are the largest consumers of burning-oil sufficiently protected by an oil which gives off explosive vapour at seventy-three degrees Fahrenheit? In America, whence most of our petroleum comes, the majority of the States require a flash-point of about one hundred and five degrees Fahrenheit; so that it would appear we accept the inferior oils which are not saleable in the country of their origin. Burning-oil is a necessary of life to the poor; and the artistic forms in which lamps are now produced make it a desirable adjunct to the luxuries of the rich. It is therefore reasonably contended that Government should not allow the importation of oils that will not stand a temperature of at least one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, a condition which has always been maintained by the paraffin oils produced in Scotland.

A MOONLIGHT SURPRISE-PARTY.

FOUR of us started—two in a light wagon, two on horseback. We were well armed, revolvers and shot-guns, the latter loaded with buckshot. We were bent on rather a doubtful venture—that of intercepting and capturing, if possible, two stock thieves, for whom warrants had been issued by the local Court, and who were known to be in our district, trying to cross into Idaho. These men, father and son, were desperadoes of an average Western type. They were suspected of having been concerned in more than one murder in the past, and their record for years as cattle and horse thieves could not well be improved on. They were desperate men, thoroughly up to every trick in the mountains, were well armed and horsed, and had boasted that they never would be taken alive. The Sheriff, in whose hands the warrants were, had come to us for the information and assistance we had offered. 'We' simply were representatives of a larger number of stock-owners, who had made up their minds that they would free themselves from the domination and severe loss arising from the concerted action of an organised gang of thieves, some of whom we had already sent out of the country, and the very 'head-centre' or chief of whom we were determined to capture on this present expedition, if it was within the range of possibility.

The little village where we met in the afternoon was in a ferment of excitement. Every one knew we were after Old Sam; and out of some seventy souls, over fifty hoped we would not get him. Stock-thieves are more or less popular with the miners; I hardly know why, unless it is because the latter can always buy cheap beef from the former. Strategy was necessary for our purpose, so we carelessly inquired of some luke-

warm friends whether it was true that our men had been seen that morning going in a certain direction, adding that we supposed we should take the same direction in following them. We were confidentially told soon afterwards by another 'doubtful' friend that we were right in our proposed course, and that we should doubtless overtake our men that evening.

Information from our own spies determined us to go in a contrary direction altogether; and so long as we succeeded in throwing Sam's partisans off their guard, believing as they did that we were on a fool's errand, we were satisfied. We did not wish to be followed; and we succeeded so thoroughly in concealing our real intentions, that the loafers, spies, and friends of Sam and his gang retired to the saloon, where they gleefully drank confusion to us and our errand.

At midnight we started, our course lying up a long narrow gulch or ravine, with a solitary cabin at the head. One of our men had told us that Sam's horse was dead lame, that a friend would bring him a fresh horse that night, or morning rather, and that he and his son—a young ruffian of twenty-five years—would rest at the cabin that night. The cabin was occupied by an odd eccentric old man, who cared little for any one or that one's business, provided that he himself was paid for his services. We did not feel sanguine as to the result of our expedition; the least oversight might cause us to lose our game—for they were a wily pair, and sharp and cunning as coyotes (small wolves). Suddenly, a bright gleam ahead loomed out like a brilliant star in the gloom, for the half-moon was only rising. We felt at once we were on the right track, as no one without special cause would have such a light at that hour—now one o'clock A.M. Cautiously approaching the cabin, we fastened the team horses to some willow-bushes. One rider dismounting, the other rode slowly up to the open door, leading the odd horse. Opposite the door stood the hearth, on which was piled a roaring fire of pine-logs, the light from which streamed into the outside darkness, and gave the brilliant gleam we had noticed a mile away. Our plan was to personate the friend who was bringing the fresh horse for Sam to escape on. We were uncertain whether this plan would succeed; but we had little time for consideration, and had to work quickly.

The old man in the cabin hearing the horses' steps outside, came to the door, and with eyes half-blinded by the sudden change from light to darkness, could only see the outlines of the animals and man before him. He said: 'Is that you, George?' not suspecting the ruse being played on him.

Our man in a low tone replied: 'Yes; where are the boys?'—meaning Sam and his son.

'Lying just behind the corral, having a snooze,' was the answer.

To slip off his horse and tie both animals by their halter-straps to the cabin post was but a moment's work, and then, in a low hissing whisper, we heard the words of call: 'Come quick, boys; we've got them.'

We were standing as close in as we dared for the firelight from the open door; we had dashed through a mountain stream in front of the cabin, failing to find the log footway, and were soaking

to our waists; and rushing after our comrade behind the cabin, we found our men curled up in their blankets, but fully dressed and armed. The moon was rising over the hill-range, and threw a weird half-light on the scene—a scene liable at any moment to turn into a tragedy; for Old Sam was like a fox, and rarely closed both eyes at once. He had heard our voices, and instinctively suspecting trouble, had grasped his ivory-handled revolver, without which he never moved, ate, or slept. Another second, and some one would have been hurt; but the Sheriff—a viry, muscular dare-devil—pointing his gun at Sam—only ten feet distant—said quietly: 'Sam, put that hand down.' Slowly, reluctantly, but surely, did the hand lower, and the muzzle of the pistol with it; for Sam knew his man, and knew that delay in obeying that order meant a load, and perhaps two loads, of buckshot into his beloved body.

Running to the cabin, I seized two candles, and returning with them above my head, threw a brighter light on the most intensely real scene I have ever witnessed: Old Sam surprised in the act of rising from the ground, revolver in hand, but with lowered muzzle; the Sheriff still pointing his gun, with both hammers cocked, and finger on trigger; the son, with uplifted hands, perfectly still, silent, and watchful; the others of our party with pointed guns; myself with carbine in one hand and candles in the other; the murderous look of baffled rage in Sam's eyes; the grim determination on the faces of our party; the strong lights and shadows from the flaring candles, made an indelible picture in my mind, that years have not effaced and never will, I think. Sam was a quick and ready shot, and a second's delay might have made a very different ending to our little expedition. We handcuffed our prisoners, and taking them to the wagon, let them sit down, while two of our party went down the gulch to intercept the friend who was to bring Sam his fresh horse. But we did not find him. Possibly, he saw something wrong on nearing the cabin, and so retired.

Placing our prisoners in the wagon, we started homeward, the riders in front to show the road, as it was now getting very dark, heavy clouds having come up. Suddenly two strange horsemen appeared in front, and they were as suddenly challenged by our riders, ordered to instantly throw up their hands and state who they were and their business. This request was backed up by the presenting of two navy revolvers almost in their faces. Raising their hands, and declaring they were unarmed—which we found to be true, on searching them—they indignantly protested against our high-handed action, claiming their rights as American citizens to traverse the Public Range when and where they pleased. By way of reply we ordered them to fall in behind our wagon, our riders following close behind them, with a hint that attempts at escape might be dangerous. We knew them to be active friends and partisans of our prisoners, and a rescue was quite a possible undertaking; so we felt no scruple about gathering them in and taking them with us to our destination, where we released them with some brief but good advice as to avoiding bad company in future—advice that did not seem to be appreciated, judging from

the volleys of profanity they hurled at us as they retired. At the village, a friendly storekeeper opened his place, lighted stove and lamps, and there we kept guard over our men till daylight, giving them hot coffee, whisky, bread, and cigars—all we had. Then safely tucking them up in the wagon, handcuffed, and also chained to the seat, under the escort of the Sheriff and two men, we saw them well on their way to the county jail, some twenty-five miles off. Loud was the wailing and gnashing of teeth amongst the friends of the gang next day when they realised our success and their utter failure. Our own satisfaction was not lessened by the reflection that three of our party were Englishmen.

THE WOODLANDS HOAR.

THE heavy rime of a wintry morning lies white and cold on the wide bare fields, that are shrouded in the distance by yet colder volumes of cloudy vapour, that rolls heavily in mid-air as the chill north wind rises and falls in uncertain eddies round the leafless trees. Here and there an old barn or cowed stand cold and desolate-looking in the misty silence; the fruitful fields, so lately covered with the golden treasures of harvest, are now lying fallow, their ripened crops safely garnered. The laughing brook is transformed into a sullen stream, waiting for the few more degrees of frost to turn it into ice. There seems little inviting out of doors on such a day; one shivers at the drifting mist and long shadowed lanes and stubble-fields, or turnip patches, where a few sheep are huddled in closely. But wait awhile—there is still plenty to interest any one with observant eyes; the lanes are lonely, but the hedgerows are bright with the berries of hips and haws; and in and out amongst the bare thorn-bushes are scores of tits and sparrows, hunting for their food, with busy, restless wings, and quaint little chirpings of exultation and satisfaction.

Now comes a chilly gleam from the pallid sun, and lights up the innumerable crystals clinging to the trees and hedgerows, where yet straggle long trails of blackberry, with four or five brilliant leaves not yet fallen, and some soddened fruit. Down in the sedgy ditch are brilliant orange berries of the wild arum. Farther on, a turn brings us to the woods, where the close undergrowth shelters, snug and warm, so many of our friends of fur and feather, where hares, rabbits, and squirrels burrow in comfortable quarters. Fieldfares and redwings are busy amongst the berry-bearing trees, uttering soft undernotes in call and reply. Flocks of finches rise hastily from the heaps of dead leaves, where their insect and larva food is found, uttering their sharp 'Pink, Pink' as they whirl over the hedge; and the active little tree-creeper 'twits' gaily from the fork of a decayed branch as it digs its sharp slender beak under the mossy lichen-covered bark for the minute grubs and flies it finds there. Under the low-growing branches of the holly there is a covey of partridges hustled close to the ground. As they rise sharply and

'whirl' away, you find the dry moss is warm and soft and sweet-smelling.

The early part of winter was singularly mild and open—very little frost before Christmas; and now, early as it is in the year, faint touches of renewed life are visible in the hardier shrubs and plants—the spines of the beech and birch are brighter: under the dead leaves are green blades of grass; and freshly budded violets, tiny green knots, but still there. Now and then the rocks grow noisy and whirl about the tree-tops.

The sun has disappeared again, and the wind moans fitfully in the hedges; the mist has changed to heavy gray clouds; the atmosphere seems charged with a fine impalpable powder, that falls through the leafless trees with a soft hissing sound: faster it comes down, and lo! in a few minutes the scene has changed; a white cold mantle is over the woods that looked so warm and sheltered; and getting into the lane, the whirling north wind drives round the corner and over the barren uplands, with a keen sharpness unfelt in the morning. The sharp fine snow cuts the face into a tingling glow; but the nerves are braced; and striding quickly homewards through the eddying wind, imagination pictures the warm room and red firelight that will welcome our return the more pleasantly for our brisk, invigorating walk through the rough weather.

OLD VOICES.

Across the seas they come to me,
Old voices of a happier day,
When Love was young and Hope was high,
And flowers grew bright about my way.
I sit within the rose-girt pane,
And watch the tranquil western sun
Dip gently in the golden sea,
And think of friends for ever gone.
And while I gaze and think, to me
There come old voices o'er the sea.

I hear them when alone I stroll
Along the white surf-beaten shore;
They mingle in the fisher's song,
Heard 'mid the lull of ocean's roar:
And when with toilsome steps, and slow,
I struggle up the fern-clad cliffs
Which slope in beauty from the bay,
And watch far off the fading skills,
They whisper of old times to me,
These voices from across the sea.

So when night curtains sea and shore,
And white stars gleam across the wild,
And underneath the shadowy limes
With thoughts of other days beguiled
I linger long, too sad to rest,
For in this lonely heart of mine,
There whisper as from long ago
Old echoes that have grown divine;
Old echoes from across the sea,
They whisper of old times to me.

WILLIAM COWAN.

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A CITY OF WISCONSIN.

BY ONE OF ITS CITIZENS.

PERHAPS some of your readers would desire to hear of the rise of a town or city in what, forty years ago, could well be styled the Far West, situated as the site was then in the wilds of Wisconsin. But in a country of the size of the United States of America, where the current of immigration is continually flowing past a certain point towards the setting sun, the inhabitants of the city of Oshkosh think they cannot any longer be classed as residing in the Far West, and they themselves are apt to apply that term to such places as border on the Rocky Mountains, or those States which are bounded by the Pacific Ocean. The name of Oshkosh is so unique and uncommon, that to many residents of distant places in the country it is popularly supposed to be a mythic city, they not even taking the trouble to look the matter up in a gazetteer. In the large theatres of the eastern cities, when the funny man bounces on the stage and is asked where he comes from, if he gives Oshkosh as the answer, he is invariably greeted with the most tumultuous applause, a circumstance which is certain to raise the ire of any citizen of our burgh who may happen to be present. However, there is no question but that our beautiful city really exists, and that of late years it has been coming into prominence, not only as a summer resort, but in various other ways, as we shall see.

The city was originally named after a celebrated chief of a tribe of Indians who made the shores of Lake Winnebago in years gone by their hunting-grounds. The situation is pleasant and well chosen, being on a point at which the Fox River enters the lake. This latter body of water is about thirty miles in length, and from ten to fourteen in breadth. Its depth will not average more than twenty-five feet. It is the largest body of fresh water within the confines of a single State, and its appearance indicates that it

was far larger in former times—a fact which can easily be confirmed by the shells, sand, and drift found at long distances from its present boundaries. Along the ridges and high lands which border the lake, traces of the Glacial Age are plainly to be seen in the boulders, composed of granite and gneiss, which are to be found scattered about, and which vary in size from a foot in diameter to several tons in weight. There are no quarries of any such stone to be found near here, and these wanderers seem to be well rounded and scored from the friction to which they had been subjected.

Oshkosh in former years was a great lumber centre, and nearly all the 'cut'—that is, the daily output of a saw-mill—was then disposed of within the State, to supply the needs of the emigrants who flocked to the land of promise. The supply of standing pine was then situated only at a short distance from the settlement, and the logs which were cut in the winter could be sawn early in the following summer: but now, all is changed; the standing pine is distant from the city over two hundred miles, and it takes a second summer to float the saw-logs to the few mills which are still in operation. Nearly all the saw-mills have been moved up north nearer to the pine, and the few which remain supply the higher grades of lumber for the use of such factories as make sash, doors, and venetian blinds. There are more of these articles turned out in a year here than in any other city of the United States. Some of the factories make as many as a thousand doors, with sash and blinds in the same proportion, in a single day. Oshkosh also possesses the largest match-factory in the country, an establishment which is yearly being extended in size; and if the white pine only holds out, there is no telling what will be its ultimate capacity.

The unit of measure in lumber in Wisconsin, and in fact all over the States, is one thousand superficial feet one inch in thickness. It is sold at so much per thousand, according to grade. The mills in Oshkosh range in capacity from

an output of sixty up to one hundred and twenty-five thousand feet every ten hours, that being considered a day's work; but such capacity or output, great as it seems, is far exceeded by mills in the northern peninsula of Michigan, some of which are able to cut two hundred and fifty thousand feet each day.

Within the past six years, band-saws have entirely superseded the large five-feet circulars formerly in use. The reason of the change is, that thinner saws can be made to do the work better, and with less waste of material, for that which heretofore passed off in refuse or sawdust is now utilised as lumber. It would have been well had the change in the cutting of lumber been introduced years ago, for then there would not have been the reckless waste of the magnificent pine forests of this section of the country.

The first or highest class of saw-logs are composed of soft white pine, and eminently suited for the manufacture of sash, doors, blinds, and match-splints. Therefore no logs but of a superior grade are commonly sent for sale to Oshkosh, for the cost of driving or of floating a low class of logs a distance of two hundred miles would not pay expenses; such a class of logs being manufactured into 'culls'—the cheapest class of lumber—and 'common' lumber, near the spot where they were cut; and when manufactured, the lumber is shipped per rail to the various States where there is a demand for it.

But the industry which dwarfs and overshadows all others in our beautiful burgh at present is the cutting of ice on Lake Winnebago. The winter of 1889-90 was a phenomenal one all over the western States. Even in this latitude there were but a few really cold days, and as a consequence, little if any ice could be put up at Milwaukee, Chicago, or other cities. Those companies engaged in the business south of us were therefore compelled to come north to get a supply for the vast requirements of their trade during the coming summer. This state of affairs happened only twice before in a period of seventeen years. It is difficult for a person living in a cool climate like that of the British Islands to realise the magnitude of the ice industry in the United States. What a few years since was considered as a luxury, is now regarded as an article of prime necessity. Its uses are so various, that I do not see how people could get along without it. The daily supply deposited in the kitchens of the rich and poor forms but a small portion of the uses to which it is applied. The demand for it at the breweries, the meat-markets, the creameries, and also in the shipping of fish and fruits in the refrigerating cars, consumes a quantity which is enormous. To stand on the banks of our lake and view the fifteen hundred or perhaps two thousand men together with the large squadron of horses and portable steam-engines, all at work from six o'clock in the morning till ten at night, then a person is apt to realise in a small degree the magnitude of the work, and the vast quantity of ice necessary to carry a few cities safely over our fervid summers.

Oshkosh is only one of the places on our lake where the ice companies work; they are also to be found equally busy wherever there are shipping facilities, or where the various railroads can

run side-tracks to the water. This statement applies not only to Lake Winnebago, but to every body of water all over the North-west from which ice can be loaded on the cars and shipped south. The system applied here to the work reduces the cost of cutting the ice and placing it either in the gigantic stores or on board the cars to from sevenpence to one and sevenpence per ton; and the freight to Chicago is about four shillings more; while speculators in 1890 were buying up all the ice in Oshkosh at from ten shillings to twelve and sixpence per ton—thus giving a handsome profit to the ice-cutters. The quantity cut that year within six weeks and stored here was computed at one hundred and fifty thousand tons; and during that time one thousand cars have been shipped direct, ranging from fifteen to twenty tons each car. The ice on the lake runs from fourteen to twenty inches in thickness; and in exceptionally cold winters it has been as thick as three feet. When an ice-field is chosen for operations, the snow has to be removed with scrapers and dumped into a hole in the water; then a man marks it off with an ice-plough, drawn by a steady team of horses, into oblong squares sixteen by twenty-four inches; and he is followed by the regular ice-ploughs, which cut four inches in depth, and commonly go over the field a second time. The work is now ready for the crew of men furnished with slender steel bars, provided with chisel points, who force the blocks of ice asunder with a single downward stroke; and then they are pushed through a narrow canal by another crew till they are hoisted by the steam-engines, in endless chains, up an inclined plane either into the stores or on board the railroad cars.

The instruments which are used to cut into the ice, although called ploughs, do not bear much resemblance to those used in tillage. They consist of seven cast-steel cutters, three-eighths of an inch in thickness, secured in a plough-beam, and all set on one level. They are kept very sharp, and do the work most effectively. A team of horses draws them along with all the ease possible. Oshkosh has derived a most substantial benefit from this industry, as it comes at a season of the year when work is difficult to procure, and a large portion of the population would otherwise be compelled to pass the winter in enforced idleness.

The companies cutting ice here, besides paying out large sums for labour, buy all their supplies of lumber, nails, and sawdust for packing, at this point, and the city gives in return many acres of frozen water. There is no doubt of it but Oshkosh gets the best of the bargain.

That portion of Wisconsin contiguous to the State of Michigan is rich in iron and copper deposits, nor is it destitute of even veins of silver and gold; but the latter two are not present in such quantities as would be considered worth the cost of development. The State of Michigan is also abundantly supplied with mineral wealth; but in neither case can any of the ore taken out in the State be smelted near the mines, for there is no coal found in either of these States. It is much to be regretted that there is no fuel for smelting purposes; for if there were, this would be one of the greatest manufacturing points on the face of the globe, as the

people have all the *vim* and push for which the North-western States are famous.

It certainly does seem strange to have such vast bodies of mineral wealth in sight and yet possess no adequate means of utilising it on the spot. The ore has all to be shipped to Cleveland by boat, and to Joliet by rail, as at these points coal is abundant, and there are large smelting-works where the ore can be got ready for the market. The ore is of the richest that is mined, much of it being composed of hematite, and resembles a pure pigment of a deep-brown colour, and is so soft as to be easily crushed to powder under the foot.

The copper mines have every indication of having been worked in prehistoric times, for the galleries of former days are to be seen, and even the tools used in taking out the deposits were found by the miners who now work them. The woodwork of these tools was decayed, and fell to dust when touched, but the metal part was as intact as when formerly used. By whom were these tools wielded? Not certainly by the Indians of to-day, for they had not the industry to use tools, neither did they possess any weapons constructed of metal when they first came in contact with the white races. We find well-constructed copper spears and lances scattered all over the north-western country, but we never for a moment entertain the idea that they ever belonged to the races with whom we have been brought in contact. We know their ancestors must have been too lazy and nomadic to have manufactured such things.

In all human probability they belonged to a race of partially civilised beings, possibly the mound-builders, who certainly antedate the present Indian race. We find evidence even at this late day of the works of this curious people, who covered all the beautiful spots in the West with effigies of their industry, which in many instances have escaped the march of improvement and the plough of the pioneer. These mounds in the early spring attract the attention of even the most casual visitor, who may happen to see in the dark-green grass either the figures of fanciful animals depicted on the tumuli, or else a class which has become, like their delineators, extinct.

To this race also may have belonged the shapely copper spear and lance heads formed with socket joints now to be found in the museums of the country, and also the pieces of pottery, which are daily turned up with the plough as it passes over the sites of their former villages. In this State we often find what is called 'float copper,' which are pieces varying in weight from one to five pounds scattered promiscuously. They are formed of very pure copper, and appear certainly at one time to have been subjected to intense heat. Not unfrequently masses of ore one and two hundred pounds in weight have been discovered, which possibly formed part of a moraine in the glacial age of the world. It is to be regretted that the cupidity of the finders induced them to sell these masses, instead of depositing them in some museum with a short account of their history, so far as known, and other circumstances which might be of interest with regard to them. A few years ago one of these masses was built into a culvert on

the main road in the township of Black Wolf, six miles south of Oshkosh, and it was only when heavy rains had washed away the stiff clay from it that its brightness revealed it to be an almost solid lump of copper.

At the south-western portion of Lake Superior, where it forms the northern boundary of Wisconsin, there is a cluster of islands known as the Apostles Group. These islands are not only rich in mineral wealth, but also possess quarries of a valuable description of stone, of a dark-brown variety, which is largely used in the Western cities as a facing for the more important and expensive buildings. The freedom from flaws or cracks in these quarries renders it possible to obtain stone of almost any size. There is one at present being got out intended for exhibition at the Columbian exposition at Chicago, which stone will be the largest monolith in the world. It is said to be thirty feet longer than the obelisk now in Central Park, New York, which was brought a few years ago from Egypt. Special flat cars will have to be built for the transportation of the stone to the Garden City, and when it is in position on the Fair grounds, it will no doubt attract the attention of the foreigners who will come to visit us. The speed with which it was taken from the quarry bed will serve to show the world that with the appliances of to-day we can in a few weeks accomplish work which would task the ancient Egyptians several years to perform. With the aid of steam, diamond drills, and the electric light, we have of course the Genii in harness of which the Orientals only dreamed. Still, in one thing they will surpass us, for their stone being covered with hieroglyphics, will plainly tell its own story, as it has told it for centuries; ours, being unlettered, will require the aid of the printing-press to tell its history to the passing stranger.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate; A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.*

CHAPTER VII.—HOW AINSWORTH SOLVED HIS PROBLEM.

WHEN he was on the platform among a crowd of people, he began to wonder whether the days of the week, as well as he, had gone wrong; by the calendar it should be Wednesday, and yet the show of the platform was as that of Saturday. When he entered the train—he travelled third-class, as every intelligent, humane, and self-respecting young man should travel—and observed that he was in the midst of those who were plainly holiday-makers, he was certain the times must be out of joint. Then, suddenly, he remembered it was Whitsuntide; and that explained all. For Whitsuntide is the great Feast—as it were, the Feast of Tabernacles—of Lancashire. In the south, men forget that it is Whitsuntide after Tuesday; but in Lancashire it is Whitsuntide from Sunday to Sunday. Then manufactures, mining, and handicrafts are mostly idle for a week; then the voice of the cornet and the fife are heard in the land, and then the whole population 'wallers'—like Tom Sawyer—

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'in Sunday schools,' Sunday-school treats, and Sunday-school processions.

All these manners and customs of Whitsuntide Ainsworth was well enough acquainted with, but he had forgotten it was Whitsuntide. Now that he remembered, he was struck with its significance. Were it not that he was being whirled to Holdsworth as fast as the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company could carry him, he would have stayed in town; for he was sure that Holdsworth Park would be overrun by the gay and free young Sunday scholars. But he must go on; and he comforted himself with the thought that, at the worst, Holdsworth Park was large enough to afford some seclusion, even after the Sunday scholars had all the elbow-room they wanted.

At Holdsworth not many passengers left the train. They went their several ways, and he alone went on to Holdsworth Park. In the lane leading towards the village he witnessed a scene which reminded him of a similar one in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*, a scene which it would be impossible to see enacted out of our dear, delightful, absurd, but good-humoured England. From opposite directions came with brazen bands and flaunting banners the Sunday-school processions of church and chapel; and Ainsworth mounted the bank to witness the encounter; for the lane was not wide enough to permit each to pass the other freely. On they came with clergyman and pastor at their head, like captains of their troop, and with school teachers distributed along their flanks like sergeants and corporals. When they met, however, the one did not pass triumphantly through the other, as in *Shirley*, but each halted. The captain of each troop made a sign for silence to his band; he then approached his *vis-à-vis* with his hat off and shook hands with him, and after that gave the word for the band to strike up again—this time the same sacred tune. The bands played the tune through together, the troops facing each other as much as was possible, while some of the non-commissioned and private on either side looked not too well pleased with the situation. Ainsworth, however, was delighted: if the scene was a trifle absurd, it was friendly and humane; and when, the music in common being played, the two troops filed past each other as best they could, he said to himself: 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! But, if I am not mistaken, the real cause of this display of good feeling is that very kindly gentleman, George Sutfield. It is impossible for both parson and pastor to be friendly with him—as I am sure they must be—and not to be friendly with each other. So shines a good man in a naughty world.'

Thus thinking of the admirable Sutfield, and all his humane and generous ways, he wandered on into the tidy, trim village and forgot for the time his own anxiety. The village seemed deserted of all save a few of the very oldest and the very youngest of its population. Here and there a gaffer or a gammer sat on a doorstep or on a stool against the wall, blinking and basking in the sun, and holding in a striving youngster with a tether of web selvage and the impassiveness of Fate. Here and there a cat lay on a window-sill, limp with heat, and looking like

a dish-clout flung out to dry; and here and there a dog spread himself at ease in the warm dust of the road, as if he well knew there was no danger to be apprehended from passing carts or other vehicles that day. Through this peaceful scene Ainsworth passed, knowing well its meaning: that all the active population were gone to disport and to feast in Holdsworth Park.

He continued on his way till he reached the lake or dam. He walked to a spot on its bank where grew some alders and threw himself on the turf that sprang soft and green in their shade. Ducks and swans swam towards him in expectation of crumbs; but he had none to give them, and they left him with sounds of derision. Thus undisturbed and abstracted, he at length turned his attention to the purpose for which he had made this excursion. He put it in his pipe with his bird's-eye, and for some time smoked with great deliberation. He had, as I have said, a problem to solve and a corollary, but the corollary proved—like a lady's postscript—to be the more important of the two. Should he—as his editor had desired—'tone down the severity' of his dramatic criticism? Certainly not! What? Write to the prompting of something other than his own judgment!—to the dictation of some one other than himself! Surrender his right of opinion, which any young man in the pit could freely exercise! Of what use was criticism if it was not free? He would maintain the birthright of the critic. That meant, therefore, that he must resign his post on *The Lancashire Gazette*, which implied that he must seek occupation elsewhere. But where? Since ever he had left Oxford and come to Lancashire, he had looked forward to a London career; was the time arrived for that? He doubted it. It would be a perilous thing to launch himself on the wide sea of London journalism with no better recommendation than that he had quarrelled with the editor of *The Lancashire Gazette*. But if he could not risk the resignation of his present post, he must fall in with the wish of his chief, and 'tone down,' &c.—and that, of course, he could not do. Yet—And so the discussion with himself went on in the undecided way we all know.

While he smoked and revolved these things, he let his eyes idly rove about the lake and over the features of a new building which Sutfield had reared upon the opposite bank, a building which Ainsworth believed was set apart for some new and secret process of calico-printing. As his eye ranged vaguely from window to window, suddenly he saw as it were a vision of a black face and a white turban. What had overcome him that such a hallucination should present itself to him then? He took his pipe from his mouth, rubbed his hand across his eyes, and looked again. The vision had disappeared; but as he continued looking, slow to believe that what he had seen was merely a creature of his brain, he saw it again at another window—again the black head and neck—with the face half-averted—and the white turban! He looked steadily, and saw the head pass slowly from window to window, as if the person to whom the head was attached were attentively examining everything as he moved along! It was difficult not to believe that he saw a living human being; and yet how was it possible that a black man in a white

turban should be alone in a Lancashire mill? It would not be more strange to see some morning a Moorish Kadi sitting cross-legged on the bench of magistrates of the borough.

He jumped up, determined to have his doubt settled, and made his way round towards the building. He was brought up short, however, by finding that the great gates which admitted to the precincts of the works were firmly closed, as was also the little postern against the lodge. It seemed, too, that the lodge and gate keeper must be making holiday with the rest; for no knocking on his door or on the postern brought any response. Ainsworth therefore turned away, and went back to the spot under the alders, whence he had seen the vision of the black man. He waited for some time, but no black man reappeared; and then he wandered down the clough.

The more he thought of his vision the more it disturbed him. It disturbed him more than it would have disturbed a man of less knowledge and speculation. He knew, for instance, that Suffield had some secret of his business shut up in that building where he had seen the black man; he knew that in the town there were several Parsee merchants, active with real intellectual activity and crafty with true Eastern craft; and he knew that the Parsees of Bombay were at that hour striving their utmost to compete with Lancashire for the cotton and calico trade of India. What more likely, then, than that a creature of theirs should be commissioned to spy out what he could of Suffield's successful methods? He resolved to seek Suffield out and tell him what he had seen.

He crossed the stream by a narrow foot-bridge and climbed the opposite side of the clough to enter the park. He crossed into the park by that stile on which Suffield had sat in the early morning, and then—to his amazement—saw sauntering on before him a man in a white turban and a kind of white blouse girt about with a red sash or *cummerbund*. He quickened his pace to overtake the man. When he had overtaken him he was at a loss what to do. He could not demand brusquely: 'Are you the person I saw in one of the buildings of Suffield's works?' That appeared to him uncalled-for rudeness even to a black man, who is, after all—as the undergraduate said of his tutor—'a man and a brother.' Not knowing what else to do, he was therefore passing on, when the black man made him pause.

'Respectable sir,' said he, bowing low, with his black hands crossed on his white bosom—'fine Englishman, with regards may I say?'

Ainsworth stopped, and the black man smiled upon him in a simple childlike way that should have banished suspicion. But Ainsworth felt a stern sense of duty; moreover, although the man's words were intelligible, his meaning was not; and he consequently did not smile in return.

'Do you mean,' he asked, 'that you wish to speak to me?'

'Sir,' said Daniel—for of course it was he—'you truly mention it. If you look for the parties of amusement, I beg to say they are almost at the dining off the people, and besides several national foods, curries made by me from

fine recipes at your respectable service, sir; hope you like an economical dish which little care and attention is given to it.'

'Thank you very much,' said Ainsworth, feeling that the man meant well, however he expressed himself. 'May I ask if you also belong to the parties of amusement?'

'No, sir,' answered Daniel, smiling again; 'the fact is I myself am servant, cook, et cetera, to the Sahib Raynor, now staying at the great Hall.'

'What! Mr Raynor the traveller? He has come, then?'

'With regard to your speeches, sir, the Sahib Raynor came the day before it was yesterday.'

'And do you,' said Ainsworth, foolishly thinking to catch his black man unawares—'do you often have business down there at the works all by yourself?'

'Sir,' said Daniel, smiling most serenely, 'I take myself all alone for agreeable walks in the scenery; I range my mind; I improve myself in the great England and Lancashire; and I practise the conversations and the ways and the means. Good-morning; good-bye, sir.'

Bewildered to find the right meaning in that maze of words, and rebuffed in his attempt to catch the man out, Ainsworth said 'Good-bye' somewhat gruffly and went on his way. In the park, outside the lawn before the mansion, he saw there was a great tent pitched, towards which streams of stragglers were setting from all quarters, and in and out of which men and women were hasting and flitting, like bees to and from a hive. It seemed the centre of interest and activity, and towards it, therefore, he bent his steps. While he was yet a good way off, Suffield hailed him from the door of the tent.

'Holloa, Ainsworth! Come along, my son; better late than never.' With him stood a young lady in white—his daughter, Ainsworth could see—and when the young man reached him, he continued: 'My little girl here and her cousin called for you at the office to bring you along in the carriage; but you were gone: earlier than usual, eh?'

'I am sorry I missed them,' answered Ainsworth, saluting Suffield's daughter. 'But I dare say I did leave the office a little earlier than I commonly do.'

But Suffield was evidently thinking of something else already: the thought which would always come uppermost in his mind was how he could do a good turn to a friend, especially to the friend that at the moment was by him.

'You've heard of Lord Clitheroe—the Earl of Padiham's son?' said he, laying his hand on Ainsworth's shoulder and speaking in his ear. 'This is him;' referring with his thumb to a tall, full-bearded young man, who stood a step behind him talking with Miss Suffield, with critical but admiring eyes bent upon her. 'He's a clever fellow; you ought to know him: he's a rising politician.' Then turning, with his hand still on Ainsworth's shoulder, he said—before Ainsworth could utter 'Yea' or 'Nay'—'Clitheroe, let me introduce to you my friend, Mr Alan Ainsworth. I think you two should know each other.'

It was done easily, without the slightest vulgar touch of ostentation or obsequiousness, as if George Suffield had been to the manner born; which Ainsworth was inclined to wonder at, till

he considered that, after all, the best prompters of good manners are a gentle heart and a generous nature.

Lord Clitheroe responded to the introduction as it had been made, easily and frankly. 'Oh, yes,' said he; 'I remember Mr Ainsworth at Oxford.'

'Oh, ah,' said Suffield; 'sort of college chums.'

'Scarcely so much as that,' said Ainsworth, with a slight hint in his voice of his appreciation of the difference in their rank. 'I think it was only at the Union that Lord Clitheroe and I met.'

'And bitterly denounced each other's politics,' added Lord Clitheroe.

'That's all right,' said Suffield. 'A good stand-up fight of any sort is the best way of beginning to be friends. But Ainsworth's line is different now; he is great as a dramatic critic. Didn't you read the notice of the play in *The Gazette* this morning, Clitheroe?'

'I did,' answered Clitheroe, 'and liked it very much.'

'That's more than my editor did,' said Ainsworth with a laugh. 'He says I mustn't write like that any more.'

'So ho!' exclaimed Suffield. 'You'll have to cut *The Gazette*, then?'

'I have just been turning the matter over,' said Ainsworth, 'considering what I shall do.'

'You must come to London, my lad,' said Suffield, clapping his hand on his shoulder. 'That's the place for you. I'll manage it for you.'

'You are very good,' said Ainsworth. 'I dare say it will have to come to that.'

'Of course it will.—But now we are forgetting this spread for the folk. I think we must all lend a hand—mustn't we, Phemy?—to get it in order.'

'If you will come with me, Mr Ainsworth,' said Phemy, 'we shall soon get the other things that are wanted. We are going to decorate the tables a little, you know, with flowers: our people love flowers.'

'I'm sure you must have taught them that, Miss Suffield,' said Lord Clitheroe gallantly.

'Oh, no, I haven't,' said Phemy, with a candid look of surprise.

So it came to pass that in a minute or two Ainsworth entered with Miss Suffield the ample conservatories attached to the Hall. They had barely entered when she exclaimed that she had forgotten something.

'Wait here for me,' said she, and fled.

Left alone, he wandered slowly down between the terraces of gorgeous and richly-scented flowers, thinking of nothing in particular, but letting the beauty and the odour of the bewildering array of blooms subdue his senses. Presently he came upon a glass door, which he opened. He found himself in a wide inner apartment of glass and flowers, which he at once recognised as the conservatory immediately annexed to the drawing-room. On the tiled floor were spread costly Persian rugs, and in the centre was a small fountain, in the sunken basin of which grew rare specimens of water-lilies. He was no sooner in than he heard voices, whether in the conservatory or just within the drawing-room, he could not tell;

for a big, flowering magnolia prevented him from seeing any person. He turned to withdraw; but the latch had somehow caught, and the door would not open. He had a mind to go forward, when certain words that caught his ear prevented him.

'Hush! There is some one coming,' said one voice—the voice of Miss Raynor. 'I like you very much,' she continued, evidently in reply to something said by another voice; 'but I prefer you to still be my kind cousin, George. So, please, don't speak to me of these things again.'

'Then, Bell,' said the other voice—the voice of young George Suffield—in an aggrieved and somewhat sulky tone, 'there is some one you've got to know in London, and that letter this morning was from him.'

'I think it is unworthy of you, George, to say that,' said Isabel. 'If it were another than you that said it, I should just be silent, and let him believe what he liked. But we are cousins, George; we have grown up together, and I am very sorry I cannot be what you wish; and so I tell you frankly there is no person in London of the kind you mean.'

'If there is not,' urged George, 'why do you refuse to listen to me. See, Bell; I've waited for you ever since I was a little boy; it's not fair—it's not right—of you to say "No" to me so easily and promptly.'

'Oh, George, I don't say it easily nor promptly; I say it reluctantly and I say it with pain. If I were a young, thoughtless girl, and did not believe that a woman should feel towards a man she means to live with always very much more than I feel towards you, I might even have said "Yes."'

'You may say "Yes" yet, Bell. We shall understand each other better after this. Do not answer me at all now. Wait a while; wait a year, if you like. Do that—won't you, Bell?'

'Very well,' said Isabel, after a moment's hesitation. 'If it will make you happy, George, I'll wait.'

'Thank you, Bell. Thank you—and bless you.'

'Don't, George,' said she, as if in repulse of some slight attempt to embrace her. 'Be good, and control yourself.'

Then George withdrew by the drawing-room; and Isabel appeared round the magnolia and stood before Ainsworth, whose thought and pulse were in a turmoil.

'Forgive me,' he stammered with his eyes down: he did not dare to raise them. 'I wandered in here by this door; and when I heard voices and tried to go back, the door would not open; and I could not go on and appear before you.'

She said not a word, nor stirred; and he raised his eyes to look at her. Upon that—as if the expression of his face and the light in his eyes at once betrayed him to her—she was suffused with an overwhelming blush; she looked at the closed door behind him, and turned and fled like a stricken deer.

Yes; Ainsworth now understood, without recognising himself. The jealousy, sharp and wild, which seized him when he discovered that another man was seeking to win this lady, and the mad suspicion that others also might think

her love worth winning, precipitated feelings which had long been hanging about him like a haze. Now he saw in a burning light that it was a matter of the supremest moment that Isabel Raynor should love him, and him alone. Now he felt himself a new, a stronger, a more resolute, a more clear-seeing and alert man. His problem was solved and its corollary. His way was made plain before him: he must leave Lancashire and *The Lancashire Gazette*, and compel reluctant Fortune to befriend him in that London where Isabel lived and moved and had her being.

HAMPSTEAD HEATH TREASURE-TROVE.

DURING the afternoon of the 21st of July 1892, whilst seated beneath a tree upon Hampstead Heath, a lady was astonished to see protruding from the ground and glistening in the sunshine something which upon closer examination proved to be a portion of a candlestick, with another part lying close beside it. Her little child who was with her proceeded with his spade to turn over the loose mould, the result being the further discovery of two flasks and a smaller portion of a candelabrum. In accordance with an Act passed in the reign of Edward I., it is customary for the coroner of the district in which such objects are discovered to hold an inquiry. The result of the inquiry into the objects found upon Hampstead Heath was to prove that they had been discovered as stated, and constituted what is known as Treasure-trove; as a result, the objects were formally handed over to the Treasury, who in modern times usually give the finders of such trove the bullion value of the material, if such objects are required for public institutions, coins and materials not so required becoming the property of the finder. These objects, forming an interesting section in the history of French art, have been sent to the South Kensington Museum, where they are now to be seen.

The treasure-trove consists of two spirit or scent flasks with screw tops; a small flat cup with handles; two sockets and nozzles of candlesticks; and one small portion, probably the handle, of a cup or a portion of a candelabrum; the weight of the whole being nearly fifty-nine ounces. The flasks are rectangular in form, and are similar in shape to the tea-caddies of the last century. They are both of very massive silver gilt, and are ornamented on the four sides with similar decoration, consisting of a flowing scroll at the base, from which arises a stem with branching floral ornament. The third object consists of a flattened cup, with handles in the form of griffins' heads with attenuated bodies. It has in raised-work around the body a row of acanthus leaf ornament alternating with tongue ornament. The two sockets and nozzles of candlesticks are encircled by acanthus leaves, which appear to have been made separately and afterwards attached to the body.

These objects are very interesting, although it is somewhat difficult to say whether the ornamentation upon them is English or French. The body of the flasks is undoubtedly French, having been made in Paris in 1672; but the ornamentation is made after the style of English work of that

period, similar work being found upon cups and tankards having English Hall marks exhibited near them in the Museum. The decoration appears to have been cast and afterwards chiselled.

Before mentioning the marks found upon these objects it may not be uninteresting to note those which French manufacturers were compelled to place upon their goods. From the year 1506, the makers of plate usually placed their initials upon such pieces, these initials afterwards becoming known as the 'Maker's Mark.' From the years 1275 to 1791, it was necessary to have stamped upon each object the 'punch of the Common Hall.' In 1275, when its use was first ordered by Philip le Hardi, it consisted of a fleur-de-lis; from 1461 to 1783 it was some letter of the alphabet, over which was placed a crown. The letter 'C' was used in Paris in 1671-72.

The sovereigns Henry III. and Louis XIII., in order to increase the revenue, had endeavoured to impose a tax upon plate; but it was not until the reign of Louis XIV. that this tax was successfully imposed by an order dated March 31, 1672. The first mark used for this duty was the Mint letter of the town placed beneath a fleur-de-lis, and was known as the *poignon de charge*, or 'Farmer's Mark,' which letter for Paris was 'A.' Nine years later, a second mark was placed upon gold and silver smith's work, in order that the tax might be more strictly enforced, and consisted of a small mark, such as a human head, or that of some bird or beast. These Farmers' marks lasted until the abolition of all taxes in 1791.

Upon the base of both of the flasks found upon Hampstead Heath is seen the Farmer's mark, being the letter 'A' surmounted by a crown with three fleurs-de-lis, one above the 'A' and one on either side, constituting the mark of Vincent Fortier, the Farmer-general of Duties from October 1672 to October 1680. One of the flasks has also the letter 'A' surmounted by a crown, being the Paris punch of the Common Hall. The second flask has a crown and a part of another letter, probably 'C,' which has already been noted as being the Paris mark for 1672; and also bears the initials 'L. R.' separated by small lines and having two leaves beneath.

In regard to the ornamentation, which has already been described, upon these flasks, it is almost certain that it has been made by some other artist than the person who actually made them, for upon both are found the initials 'P. D. N.' punched into the floral ornament, surmounted by a hanging flower with clusters of fruit in a semicircle, these latter being very minute and indistinct. These initials appear twice upon one of the flasks, whereas upon the base the maker's mark, 'L. R.,' appears, from which it may be inferred that the flask is of French origin, the ornamentation upon it having been cast and chiselled by some English artist.

Upon the base of the cup there is a maker's mark consisting of a 'T' and 'I' separated by two minute tongue-like pieces, being the only mark appearing upon it. It is probably English work of about the year 1685, a church in Gloucestershire having a similar cup bearing this date upon it.

As in all treasure-trove, it is exceedingly difficult to account for its being hidden away. The

objects found upon Hampstead Heath may have been stolen, and then hidden away, the person so stealing dying and leaving no trace of their whereabouts; or they may have been hidden away in order to escape the great destruction of plate which took place in 1697, in the time of William III., or on account of the fear of a French invasion early in the present century. It was stated at the inquiry that the objects may have been immersed in the Thames mud for some time previous to their being placed where they were eventually found.

Many valuable objects of the gold and silver smith's art have been recovered during the present century as treasure-trove: among the most celebrated may be mentioned that known as the Hildesheim Treasure, on account of its having been found near Hildesheim in 1869. Some German soldiers who were at work outside the walls of the city were throwing up a trench for rifle-practice, and unearthed this valuable collection of thirty objects, most of which are Greek and Roman in form. The collection at the present time is to be seen in the Berlin Museum, and consists chiefly of cups, a patera, dishes, stewpans, and plates, together with table and lamp supports. The most important object amongst them is a large bowl standing upon a small foot, and having small handles, probably used for mixing wine and water. It is considered likely that they may have formed the camp service of a Roman commander. Since the Romans had no settlement as far north as Hildesheim, it is difficult to understand how these objects came to be placed where they were found. It is thought that they may have been stolen by or given to some chieftain, who afterwards was compelled to flee, and hid his treasure in the expectation of some day being able to return and unearth it. This treasure-trove probably dates from the first century A.D.

On the banks of the river Argish, a tributary of the Danube, flowing from the Carpathians, some peasants found, in 1837, a very important collection of goldsmith's work of the fourth century A.D., now known as the 'Petrossa Treasure.' Unfortunately, it was hidden away by the finders and broken up; and it was not until some time afterwards that its existence became known to the Government, and steps taken to secure the pieces. Out of twenty-two separate parts about twelve remain, these latter being shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, and afterwards at the South Kensington Museum. The most important objects amongst them were a massive gold dish worth about one thousand pounds, which had been broken up into four portions, happily now placed together again, and a ewer twenty-one inches in height, having an elongated spherical body with a flat lip and handle. These two objects are classical in form, and were probably made in the fourth century. Their origin has given rise to much speculation; by an expert they were thought to have been made for military officers or colonists who had to flee suddenly before some inroad of the Huns, either in the capital of the East or in that of an outlying settlement of Hungary, or some Danubian province.

In Spain, at a place near Toledo called La Fuente de Guarrazar, some peasants found, in

1858, a very valuable collection of goldsmith's work and precious stones at a slight distance beneath the surface. They do not seem to have known that they had found anything very valuable, and divided the spoil amongst themselves. At a little later period of time, some person seems to have heard of the find, and purchased all the portions, and joined them together again, and sent them to Paris, where they were purchased by and placed in the Cluny Museum. They are Spanish work of the seventh century, and consist of eleven crowns of pure gold, some set with stones, others chased and worked in *repoussé*, some of the fragments having chains attached to them. Upon one of the crowns in letters appears the name of King Swinthila (621 to 631 A.D.). Most of the crowns were votive offerings, which were usually hung over the altars of the churches. The character of the work is Gothic, most probably founded on Roman art.

In France, near Bernay, a farmer named Prosher Tauxin, whilst working in the fields, found a collection of silversmith's work covered by a Roman tile. This treasure was subsequently purchased by the State, and placed in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. From inscriptions upon the plate it is known that they formed the treasure of the Temple of Mercury Augustus at Caneto, near Bernay, having been dedicated to the gods by various people, among others by C. Propertius Secundus and Q. Domitius Jutus, and appear to have been placed in the spot where they were found some time during the third century A.D. The vases are of different epochs and of unequal merit, the oldest, which are the most beautiful, probably dating from the fourth to the second century B.C., and worked by the most skilful of the Greek chasers. Others are of a later date, up to the second century A.D., and would appear to be Gallo-Roman work.

In Hungary, at Nagy-Szent-Miklos, in 1799, a very curious and interesting set of ewers, vases, cups, and bottles was unearthed, since known as the Treasure of Attila. They are beautifully chased, engraved, and some worked in *repoussé*, and were probably made by some tribes who were settled near the Danube in the fourth century, the workmanship having been assigned to the time of the Eastern Emperor Valens (364 to 378 A.D.); in the fifth century they were presumably in the possession of two chiefs of the 'Gepidae,' that martial tribe who settled on the banks of the Danube, and who were subdued by Attila about the year 450 A.D. They are at the present time to be seen in the Museum of Antiquities at Vienna.

Reproductions of all above objects are to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, and some of them also in the Museums of Edinburgh and Dublin and in other local Museums.

Since the beginning of the century many valuable finds have been made, principally in silver, in Wales, the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the Shetland Isles, and very generally all along the eastern sea-board of Scotland. The earliest and most noted of those Scottish finds was that of Norrie's Law, Fifeshire, to which a hawker about seventy years ago had made secret access. For many years afterwards he continued to dispose of portions of those silver relics in various quarters. It was not till 1839

that public attention was drawn to this, and a few relics were saved out of the final destruction. These, however, are all well known to archaeologists, having been many times figured and described in the leading works on the subject of antiquities.

'THE HINT O' HAIRST.'

By MENIE MURIEL DOWIE, Author of *A Girl in the Karpathians*.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

It's dowie in the hint o' hairst,
At the wa'gang o' the swallow,
When the wind grows cauld and the burns grow bauld,
And the woods are hingin' yellow.

LADY GORDON was sitting in the drawing-room, beside the large centre window; she was looking out on the garden, which the last week of a late Scotch summer made very warm and full of colour; but she did not see the Canterbury bells set out like cups and saucers of different tea-sets in all their precious varieties, and she did not notice the tall perfection of the single dahlias. Her face was lightly drawn in lines of perplexity, great distress, and indecision; the eyes always looked out from a consciousness of continual sorrow, but just now there was all the added stress of a fresh difficulty. Rose Gordon was leaning against the back of a chair, her hands behind her, her whole figure rocking now and then upon one heel; she had an expression of severe disapproval, of disgust even; she was, in fact, angry.

'Well, but mamma, if you would speak to him,' she said, very emphatically. 'He should be told! It is nonsense letting him go on like this; and besides,' with added heat, 'it is very unfair! It reflects upon you, upon me, and Willie—the family. It is simply shameful—and very little money would put it right!'

Lady Gordon shook her head. 'My dear,' she said, 'we are so poor.'

'Poor? But not so poor as all that! Of course, I know that we are poor—and I know why,' with a lightning flash of her eyes. 'John—— But there is no use going into that! Still, it would not cost much to mend the roof a little; and certainly the expenses of sending Lamont to the infirmary must be paid.'

Rose set the chair down, and began pulling some dead roses out of a bowl on the table with fingers thrilled by the feelings this subject always roused. 'What I feel is this,' she burst out suddenly; 'John may be ill—of course I know he is; but he can occupy his mind with newspapers, he can talk politics, he can play écarté for hours—why can he not listen to a single word about the condition of his tenants, why must one always?'

A man-servant came into the room, and Rose stopped abruptly and bent over the roses.

'Sir John would like to speak to you, my Lady.'

'At once, Jeffreys?—Very well, I will come.' Lady Gordon got up, and the man waited to let her pass in front of him; but Rose intervened.

'Say that her ladyship will be there in a few

minutes,' she said, in her rather imperious way. —'Mamma, do wait a moment!' She ran to the door and shut it. 'Now is your opportunity; do put it to him. Mrs Lamont is waiting in the Servants' Hall; I will go to her and say that you are speaking to John about it, and then you will send down a message!' Rose opened the door for her mother.

'Well, my dear, I will see!—It depends how he is, you know.' The poor worried lady hurried across the hall and down the corridor that led to her eldest son's rooms.

Rose brought her brows sharply together and expressed a little vexed breath; she did not go off at once to Mrs Lamont in the Servants' Hall; she stood there thinking and considering, always with the same indignation against her brother John. The wide outer door was just opposite her, with its steps down to the gravel sweep. Some one was coming up these steps, and a dog flung itself against the glass door, which, not always perfectly closed, would give way against an attack of this kind and admit 'Kate,' Willie Gordon's black spaniel, into the house.

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'What about Mrs Lamont?'

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'I know, I know!' said her brother, frowning and tattooing on the barrel of his gun.

'And if only things had been taken in time. But you know he slept in that damp down-stairs room all winter; by my advice, for I thought it would kill the children.'

'They'd have been much better able to bear it,' Willie Gordon said in an absent-minded way.

'Well, his lungs are terribly affected, I am sure. Then he has been out of work since before haying-time, and they have been fearfully poor; she could earn so little; and I know they haven't had enough to eat, and now he has something the matter with his leg!—Oh, it is a dreadful business.'

objects found upon Hampstead Heath may have been stolen, and then hidden away, the person so stealing dying and leaving no trace of their whereabouts; or they may have been hidden away in order to escape the great destruction of plate which took place in 1697, in the time of William III., or on account of the fear of a French invasion early in the present century. It was stated at the inquiry that the objects may have been immersed in the Thames mud for some time previous to their being placed where they were eventually found.

Many valuable objects of the gold and silver smith's art have been recovered during the present century as treasure-trove: among the most celebrated may be mentioned that known as the Hildesheim Treasure, on account of its having been found near Hildesheim in 1869. Some German soldiers who were at work outside the walls of the city were throwing up a trench for rifle-practice, and unearthed this valuable collection of thirty objects, most of which are Greek and Roman in form. The collection at the present time is to be seen in the Berlin Museum, and consists chiefly of cups, a patena, dishes, stewpans, and plates, together with table and lamp supports. The most important object amongst them is a large bowl standing upon a small foot, and having small handles, probably used for mixing wine and water. It is considered likely that they may have formed the camp service of a Roman commander. Since the Romans had no settlement as far north as Hildesheim, it is difficult to understand how these objects came to be placed where they were found. It is thought that they may have been stolen by or given to some chieftain, who afterwards was compelled to flee, and hid his treasure in the expectation of some day being able to return and unearth it. This treasure-trove probably dates from the first century A.D.

On the banks of the river Argish, a tributary of the Danube, flowing from the Carpathians, some peasants found, in 1837, a very important collection of goldsmith's work of the fourth century A.D., now known as the 'Petrossa Treasure.' Unfortunately, it was hidden away by the finders and broken up; and it was not until some time afterwards that its existence became known to the Government, and steps taken to secure the pieces. Out of twenty-two separate parts about twelve remain, these latter being shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, and afterwards at the South Kensington Museum. The most important objects amongst them were a massive gold dish worth about one thousand pounds, which had been broken up into four portions, happily now placed together again, and a ewer twenty-one inches in height, having an elongated spherical body with a flat lip and handle. These two objects are classical in form, and were probably made in the fourth century. Their origin has given rise to much speculation; by an expert they were thought to have been made for military officers or colonists who had to flee suddenly before some inroad of the Huns, either in the capital of the East or in that of an outlying settlement of Hungary, or some Danubian province.

In Spain, at a place near Toledo called La Fuente de Guarrazar, some peasants found, in

1858, a very valuable collection of goldsmith's work and precious stones at a slight distance beneath the surface. They do not seem to have known that they had found anything very valuable, and divided the spoil amongst themselves. At a little later period of time, some person seems to have heard of the find, and purchased all the portions, and joined them together again, and sent them to Paris, where they were purchased by and placed in the Cluny Museum. They are Spanish work of the seventh century, and consist of eleven crowns of pure gold, some set with stones, others chased and worked in *repoussé*, some of the fragments having chains attached to them. Upon one of the crowns in letters appears the name of King Swinthila (621 to 631 A.D.). Most of the crowns were votive offerings, which were usually hung over the altars of the churches. The character of the work is Gothic, most probably founded on Roman art.

In France, near Bernay, a farmer named Prosher Tauxin, whilst working in the fields, found a collection of silversmith's work covered by a Roman tile. This treasure was subsequently purchased by the State, and placed in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. From inscriptions upon the plate it is known that they formed the treasure of the Temple of Mercury Augustus at Caneto, near Bernay, having been dedicated to the gods by various people, among others by C. Propertius Secundus and Q. Domitius Jutus, and appear to have been placed in the spot where they were found some time during the third century A.D. The vases are of different epochs and of unequal merit, the oldest, which are the most beautiful, probably dating from the fourth to the second century B.C., and worked by the most skilful of the Greek chasers. Others are of a later date, up to the second century A.D., and would appear to be Gallo-Roman work.

In Hungary, at Nagy-Szent-Miklos, in 1799, a very curious and interesting set of ewers, vases, cups, and bottles was unearthed, since known as the Treasure of Attila. They are beautifully chased, engraved, and some worked in *repoussé*, and were probably made by some tribes who were settled near the Danube in the fourth century, the workmanship having been assigned to the time of the Eastern Emperor Valens (364 to 378 A.D.); in the fifth century they were presumably in the possession of two chiefs of the 'Gepidar,' that martial tribe who settled on the banks of the Danube, and who were subdued by Attila about the year 450 A.D. They are at the present time to be seen in the Museum of Antiquities at Vienna.

Reproductions of all above objects are to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, and some of them also in the Museums of Edinburgh and Dublin and in other local Museums.

Since the beginning of the century many valuable finds have been made, principally in silver, in Wales, the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the Shetland Isles, and very generally all along the eastern sea-board of Scotland. The earliest and most noted of those Scottish finds was that of Norrie's Law, Fifeshire, to which a hawker about seventy years ago had made secret access. For many years afterwards he continued to dispose of portions of those silver relics in various quarters. It was not till 1839

that public attention was drawn to this, and a few relics were saved out of the final destruction. These, however, are all well known to archaeologists, having been many times figured and described in the leading works on the subject of antiquities.

'THE HINT O' HAIRST.'

By MENIE MURIEL DOWIE, Author of *A Girl in the Karpathians*.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

It's dowie in the hint o' hairst,
At the wa'gang o' the swallow,
When the wind grows cauld and the burns grow bauld,
And the woods are hingin' yellow.

LADY GORDON was sitting in the drawing-room, beside the large centre window; she was looking out on the garden, which the last week of a late Scotch summer made very warm and full of colour; but she did not see the Canterbury bells set out like cups and saucers of different tea-sets in all their precious varieties, and she did not notice the tall perfection of the single dahlias. Her face was lightly drawn in lines of perplexity, great distress, and indecision; the eyes always looked out from a consciousness of continual sorrow, but just now there was all the added stress of a fresh difficulty. Rose Gordon was leaning against the back of a chair, her hands behind her, her whole figure rocking now and then upon one heel; she had an expression of severe disapproval, of disgust even; she was, in fact, angry.

'Well, but mamma, if you would speak to him,' she said, very emphatically. 'He should be told! It is nonsense letting him go on like this; and besides,' with added heat, 'it is very unfair! It reflects upon you, upon me, and Willie—the family. It is simply shameful—and very little money would put it right!'

Lady Gordon shook her head. 'My dear,' she said, 'we are so poor.'

'Poor? But not so poor as all that! Of course, I know that we are poor—and I know why,' with a lightning flash of her eyes. 'John—— But there is no use going into that! Still, it would not cost much to mend the roof a little; and certainly the expenses of sending Lamont to the infirmary must be paid.'

Rose set the chair down, and began pulling some dead roses out of a bowl on the table with fingers thrilled by the feelings this subject always roused. 'What I feel is this,' she burst out suddenly; 'John may be ill—of course I know he is; but he can occupy his mind with newspapers, he can talk politics, he can play *écarté* for hours—why can he not listen to a single word about the condition of his tenants, why must one always?'

A man-servant came into the room, and Rose stopped abruptly and bent over the roses.

'Sir John would like to speak to you, my Lady.'

'At once, Jeffreys?—Very well, I will come.' Lady Gordon got up, and the man waited to let her pass in front of him; but Rose intervened.

'Say that her ladyship will be there in a few

minutes,' she said, in her rather imperious way. —'Mamma, do wait a moment!' She ran to the door and shut it. 'Now is your opportunity; do put it to him. Mrs Lamont is waiting in the Servants' Hall; I will go to her and say that you are speaking to John about it, and then you will send down a message!' Rose opened the door for her mother.

'Well, my dear, I will see!—It depends how he is, you know.' The poor worried lady hurried across the hall and down the corridor that led to her eldest son's rooms.

Rose brought her brows sharply together and expressed a little vexed breath; she did not go off at once to Mrs Lamont in the Servants' Hall; she stood there thinking and considering, always with the same indignation against her brother John. The wide outer door was just opposite her, with its steps down to the gravel sweep. Some one was coming up these steps, and a dog flung itself against the glass door, which, not always perfectly closed, would give way against an attack of this kind and admit 'Kate,' Willie Gordon's black spaniel, into the house.

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'I know, I know!' said her brother, frowning and tattooing on the barrel of his gun.

'And if only things had been taken in time. But you know he slept in that damp down-stairs room all winter; by my advice, for I thought it would kill the children.'

'They'd have been much better able to bear it,' Willie Gordon said in an absent-minded way.

'Well, his lungs are terribly affected, I am sure. Then he has been out of work since before haying-time, and they have been fearfully poor; she could earn so little; and I know they haven't had enough to eat, and now he has something the matter with his leg!—Oh, it is a dreadful business.'

Willie drew a long, very deep breath, flung his head up and looked away out to the hills, frowns fleeting across his brow more quickly than the little clouds sailed over their blue points.

'And Mrs Lamont has come up to see if we can help her about sending the poor man to the infirmary; mamma is with John now; I begged her to speak to him'—

'A lot of good that will do!'

'Well—where are you going?'

'Round to the stables;' and Willie Gordon put his gun on his shoulder, caught up his game, whistled to Kate, and strode off frowning. Rose did not wonder that he gave her no sympathy, that he had not more to say; poor fellow, she knew that it was worse for him even than for her, for he could do nothing; he, who was a man and hale and strong, had to stay there calmly on the property that had always been the Gordons, and see the slow ruin creep over wood and village. Trees cut down and sold, land undrained and left a useless marsh, and the poor village a perfect fever-bed, raked at sudden intervals by disease and death.

And he, a second son, could do nothing!

Willie Gordon was twenty-six, and as full of energy as a man of perfect constitution should be: to live on at Foresk House from day to day, shooting, fishing, pottering round his little den in the garden, did not give occupation enough for Willie Gordon. And yet he could not leave Foresk on account of the delicacy of his elder brother.

His presence was chiefly of use to cheer his mother and sister; they felt their burden less when Willie was there to share it, to talk about it, to speak hopefully now and then.

But his position was a very difficult one, and he did not consider himself fitted for it; he was not a miracle of saintly patience; he was constantly irritated and chafed at the contempt he was obliged to feel for his brother.

John had been twenty-four when he came to the title; the flower of a particularly fast set of men at Cambridge, his degree was a matter of small importance to him, yet he got it within three months of his father's death, and came home to Foresk to await the commencement of the shooting season. He was handsome, and, when everything fell out to please him, he was good-natured; but he was also abnormally selfish, and incapable of the smallest sacrifice; and, what was worst of all, imbued with a mean and sceptical view of human nature, which led him to suspect every one of interested motives, and believe nobody incorruptible, nobody single-minded. In the spring-time he left Foresk rather suddenly with the intention of going abroad; and facts which came to light after his departure fully explained its abruptness.

Sir John went to Monaco, and none of the pains and pleasures of gaming passed him by; from that point his career may be imagined; the description of its details could serve no purpose, and would be only painful. He was a young man of great personal attractions and irredeemably ignoble nature; his selfishness was phenomenal, his vice little less; he wrecked the fortunes of the family in six years of unbridled extravagance, and he came home at the age of thirty to 'settle down.'

Yes, thought his mother, he is coming home; these endless calls for money, of which she had heard vaguely from their solicitor, but of whose extent she had not the slightest idea, would cease; perhaps it was to prepare her for the possibility of another Lady Gordon that he was coming, and at this notion her heart felt lighter than it had done for many a day.

Rose was glad to hear of her brother's advent: only Willie, then a great, strong fellow of four-and-twenty, looked rather grave.

Sir John came; he was five days making the journey between London and Scotland, and a telegram arrived on the day he was expected, to say he was passing the night in town and would arrive at noon next day.

Why was he pausing on the very threshold of his home?

Rose drove the phaeton to meet him on the lovely morning of his arrival, and was amazed to see him come out of the station leaning heavily on his servant's arm.

'Here you are! Well, I am glad.—Why, John, you've had an accident, that's why you stopped on the way. Ah!'

'Nonsense; nothing of the kind! Don't make a fuss! Why have you brought that thing? Where do you expect me to sit in it?'

'It's such a lovely day, I thought— Why, you'll sit here; or you can drive, if you care to'—

'Drive? Of course not! Well, I suppose I shall have to make the best of it, as it's all there is: help me up, Jeffreys.'

It was quite a business to get Sir John propped up with air-cushions in the front seat of the low pony-carriage, and he complained bitterly of the roughness of 'these confounded Scotch roads.'

'It's your own road,' said Rose coolly, 'and you can have it re-laid if you please.' And that was all she said.

Lady Gordon was at the front door when they drove up; they had seen her handkerchief waving between certain groups of trees in the avenue. This annoyed Sir John very much; his mother would see his laboured descent from the carriage, and he would have to go through the same scrutiny he had endured from Rose—only worse.

It was very much the same thing, only that Lady Gordon caught sight of his face, a face whose lines, colour, and expression told one story with terrible plainness; and the shock to her heart was such that not many words came.

He had to submit to being kissed, wept over, and commiserated; he had to hear, worst of all!—how soon the air of Foresk would set him up again—knowing all the while that he deserved no pity, that no air would ever set him up—

His brother came into the room.

Sir John was by this time sunk in a library chair, his air-cushions deftly arranged by Jeffreys, and a glass of sherry in his shaking hand.

Willie, in leggings, big boots, and shooting-clothes made of home-woven wools, stood and looked at the worn, ruined, old-young man who was his brother. Sir John was in tweeds; a travelling suit of the most tawny appearance; his face, which took a bluish-violet in the shadows, was in sharp contrast to the would-be morning-in-the-country air of his striped shirt;

his eyes, pale and sunken, strangely worsened in expression, strangely tragic in their indication of his character, met the clear, steady glance of his brother. A grave, long glance on Willie's part.

'Well, old man, and how are you?' cried Sir John, with affected heartiness.

'Oh, I'm all right!' said Willie curtly. 'Why didn't you come on last night?'

Sir John laughed nervously, irritably, but with a simulation of amusement.

'My dear fellow, let me explain for the third time! I haven't been very fit lately, and travelling tires me; so I put up at the *Porfochan Arms*, a most confoundingly uncomfortable hole, and came on to-day.'

Such was Sir John's home-coming. Before he had been a week in the house the truth came to Lady Gordon, first about the money affairs, then about her son's health.

He had three rooms arranged for his use, and he lived apart from his family, having his meals, such as they were, at his own hours. He had ruined himself in every way, and was head over ears in debt.

That had all been two years ago.

Willie had since finished his College course and returned to Foresk; there was nothing else for him to do.

He had stood by and seen his brother's tempers; known him when a few days' health led him to believe that in time his constitution would be built up again and he be able to fare once more into that world which was the only place that never seemed to weary him; had seen him again when he crawled back to convalescence after an acute spell of illness, using his first free breath to curse his 'luck.' He had also stood by when racing debts—for Sir John still followed with interest the fortunes of certain stables—had to be paid out of money which should certainly have been applied to the improvement of the estate.

And Willie had no power of his own; he had to stay and see money calmly scattered when half the sum would have enabled Sir John to do his duty as a proprietor and care for the well-being of his tenants: and he could say nothing—nothing, at least, that was listened to; and he could do nothing, nothing of any practical value; and he could earn nothing on his own account. There never was a young fellow in more irksome circumstances than Willie Gordon.

He had left his sister to go to the stable, he said; on his way there he met an under-gardener and gave him his gun and game to take to the house; then, his hands thrust deep in his pockets and Kate at his heels, he walked down one of the wood-paths, stepped over the wire-fencing that enclosed the immediate policies, and took his way towards the river.

He could do no good at home; there was an hour and a half till dinner-time, and another of those painful scenes with his mother or Rose was a thing to be avoided.

It was as well to spare himself the useless chafing of it. He went on his way then, whistling more and more and frowning less. The path, little used save daily by two labourers whose homes lay in the direction he was going, led

straight to the river whirling on its rock-laid way, and the hill-slope was covered with nut-bushes, small oaks, larches, and silver birch; the colouring was not so fine as it would be in three weeks' time, but there was never a day in the year when these woods were not beautiful.

Now and again, through the trees, Willie got a glimpse of a house, and it seemed he knew the points from which these peeps were to be had, for he looked up and paused a little whenever he came to one. It was a house that stood on a barish, raised table-land across the river; it was the Manse of Ardlach, where lived Mr Lockhart, the Free Church minister, and his wife and daughter.

The Gordons were Roman Catholics, and they knew very little of the Manse people. Rose and Aveline Lockhart knew each other by sight, but they had never spoken, and it had never occurred to them to be friendly; their ways were separate, and the distinct effort it would have required to bring them together was never made by either. Willie knew Miss Lockhart, and their acquaintance had come about in an informal way which took nothing from the pleasantness of it: she had been walking in the woods when he was shooting, and an incident, trifling but sufficient, had arisen which brought them into conversation.

Aveline was a girl who would have been remarkable in any ballroom for the very uncommon charm of her appearance—perhaps she gained a great deal by not being in a ballroom at all, but only in a wild Scotch wood all green with the first passion of spring-time.

Very often since then she and Willie Gordon had come across one another, and nearly always in that tract of woodland between her home and the wild river. She liked to sit upon the bank and watch it raging at the base of some detached rock; she liked it to roar at the very loudest; but, at the quieter parts, where yet was always the steady hum of its current, she could see the trout leap, and send her fresh voice echoing up the hill-slopes in one or other of the sweet old ballads that she loved.

Hers was too wholesome a nature ever to have found life dull at Ardlach; but her friendship with Willie Gordon, a friendship of that kind that has a world of undeclared love just pent behind the lips or half acknowledged in the heart, added immeasurably to the happiness of her days.

At the beginning of life, twenty soul-white years behind her, she was ready to be loved; and Willie would have told her so, but many things hindered him: his life was too unsettled a thing to share with any girl; his home was not the place to bring a wife to; he could not marry in his brother's lifetime, and Sir John might linger on for years. No—he could not ask her for her love; and, in the meantime, this very humble young man comforted himself with the consideration that by never putting the question, he spared himself the pain of a possible refusal.

He had her friendship, and he could love her as much as he pleased; or rather, he could not help loving her with all his strength, for that was the only way he could understand loving.

And now he was at the brink of the impatient river. A hundred yards farther on he heard a voice singing, Aveline's voice; he had heard the song before surely, but never before from her.

He went near enough to catch the words, and the sound of the river covered his footsteps:

Willie's fair, and Willie's rare,
And Willie's wondrous bonnie!

She was sitting on a mossy bank, with her back against a silver birch, all her fair hair raying out from her head the colour of pale starshine, her face wearing a strange expression as she sang; her eyes looking straight across the river and a smile in them—yes, certainly, a smile.

Now, how did that song go on?

Willie had heard Rose sing it—Rose, who sang sweetly enough, but not like Aveline.

He leaned against a tree, gave a restraining word to Kate, and thought steadily.

Aveline hummed the tune right through again, leaning over towards the ground and seeming to collect something with her hands, mosses perhaps.

Suddenly a real, deep blush came in Willie's face and mounted well among his hair; a half-laugh that was not, after all, anything so common as a laugh, seemed to well up from his very heart. His hand went up to his forehead absently, and his eyes darkened with so warm a glow that he could not see the world about him, but only another world that few can hope to see.

He forgot Kate, but she followed him when he turned and went slowly back as he had come.

He had remembered the words of that song, and they had told him a secret.

LOVE-PHILTRES.

AN expedient much practised in bygone years for inspiring and securing love was the Love-philtre, or amatory potion. It has been remarked that one of the grandest musical works in existence would never have been written had not Tristram and Ysonde drank the magic love-potion, which was so strong that it united them even after death; for 'from his grave there grew an eglantine which twined about Ysonde's statue above, and though three times they cut it down, it grew again, and ever wound its arms about the image of the fair Ysonde.' Going back to still earlier times, it is well known that the Roman poet Lucretius took his life in an amorous fit caused by a love-potion; and Lucullus lost his reason in the same way. In the middle ages, love-powders were advertised for sale, the pernicious effects of which became a matter of serious comment. At a period, too, when credulity in all kinds of occult influences taught that enchantment could be introduced into the human frame in the shape of food, or along with it, many an unlucky person was accused of using forbidden charms, and occasionally burnt at the stake as a witch. Indeed, the composition of love-philtres was supposed to be one of the most powerful of

witches' functions, and as such they fell under the legislative ordinances of our forefathers.

But the ignorant empiric, also confident in his own qualifications, never scrupled about the preparation of love-philtres, maintaining that they could be produced by the pharmaceutical art, apart from any mystical process. Hence, relying on his own medical skill, he sold these much-coveted compounds to anxious lovers, who readily paid exorbitant prices for them. As such amatory powders and potions only too frequently contained pernicious ingredients, injurious effects were occasioned by taking them, an abuse which necessitated legal interference. Again, conjurers and mountebanks made a profitable trade of love-philtres at country fairs, enticing the simple-minded folk by rehearsing to them the wonderful properties of their love-producing commodities. Shakespeare has represented Othello as accused of winning Desdemona by such means:

She is abused, stolen from me, and corrupted

By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.

Formerly, too, the village apothecary kept love-philtres among his stock of drugs; and Gay, in his *Shepherd's Week*, relates how Hobnelia was guilty of resorting to this questionable practice:

As I was wont, I trudged, last market-day,

To town with new-laid eggs, preserved in hay.

I made my market long before 'twas night;

My purse grew heavy, and my basket light.

Straight to the 'pothecary's shop I went,

And in love-powder all my money spent.

Behap what will, next Sunday, after prayers,

When to the alehouse Lubberkin repairs,

These golden flies into his mug I'll throw,

And soon the swain with fervent love shall glow.

Similarly, in the *Character of a Quack Astrologer*, published in the year 1673, we are told how 'he induces a young heiress to run away with a footman by persuading a young girl 'tis her destiny; and sells the old and ugly philtres and love-powder to procure them sweethearts.' It will be seen, therefore, from how many sources love-philtres were procurable, a proof of the wide extent to which this curious delusion prevailed in bygone times. Even at the present day it survives in our midst, cases occurring every now and then of persons being fined, in different parts of the country, for either selling or persuading love-sick damsels to purchase various mysterious compounds for influencing the affections of others.

In the preparation of the love-philtre, much importance has from the earliest period of its history been attached to the numerous ingredients used in its composition. Both in ancient and modern days, certain animals and plants have been supposed to be specially adapted for such a purpose, and have long gained a notoriety through being thus employed. Italian girls still practise the following method: a lizard is caught, drowned in wine, dried in the sun, and reduced to powder, some of which is thrown on the obdurate man, who thenceforth is theirs for evermore. A

favourite Slavonic device, writes Mr Finck, in his *Romantic Love and Personal Beauty*, 'is to cut the finger, let a few drops of her blood run into a glass of beer, and make the adored man drink it unknowingly. The same method is current in Hesse and Oldenburg; and in Bohemia, the girl who is afraid to wound her finger may substitute a few drops of bat's blood.' Another form of this mode of procedure current in the Netherlands is thus: Take a host or holy wafer, but which has not yet been consecrated; write on it certain words from the ring-finger, and then let a priest say five masses over it. Divide the wafer into two equal parts, of which keep one, and give the other to the person whose love you desire to gain. Formerly, in our own country, a nest of young swallows was buried in the earth, and such as were found with their mouths shut when disinterred were supposed to allay a lover's feelings. In Scotland, according to Mr Walter Gregor, in his *Folklore of the North-east of Scotland*, two lozenges were taken, covered with perspiration, and stuck together, and given in this form to the one whose love was sought, the eating of them being thought to excite affection. A curious old recipe, once popular amongst the English peasantry, informs us that 'inside a frog is a certain crooked bone, which, when cleaned and dried over the fire on St John's Eve, and then ground fine and given in food to the lover, will at once win his love for the administerer.'

From time immemorial flowers have been much in request as love-philtres, a highly popular one having been the pansy. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Oberon tells Puck to place a pansy on the eyes of Titania, in order that, on awaking, she may fall in love with the first object she meets:

Fetch me that flower; the herb I showed thee once;
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make a man, or woman, madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.

A favourite plant with the old herbalists was satyrium, a name applied to several species of orchis. As far back as the days of the Roman Empire, it was commonly supposed that the roots of the satyrium supplied the satyrs with food, and prompted them to commit those excesses for which they became proverbial. Kircher relates the case of a youth who whenever he visited a certain corner of his garden, became so love-sick that he mentioned this strange circumstance to a friend. On examining the spot, it was found to be overgrown with a species of satyrium, the odour of which alone had the effect of inspiring love.

Vervain has long been in repute as a love-philtre, and in many rural districts has the reputation of securing affection from those who take it to those who administer it. Another ingredient of the amatory potion once highly prized was cummin-seed. It is still popular with country lasses in Italy, who endeavour to make their lovers swallow it in order to insure their continued attachment and fidelity. Or, if the lover is going to serve as a soldier, or has obtained work in a distant part of the country, his sweetheart gives him a newly-made loaf seasoned with cummin, or a cup of wine in which cummin has been previously powdered and mixed. Then there is the basil, with its strange mystic virtues, which

in Moldavia is said to stop the wandering youth on his way, and make him love the maiden from whose hand he happens to accept a sprig. Rarely does the Italian girl pay a visit to her sweetheart without wearing behind her ear a sprig of this favourite plant. Hence, it was considered an invaluable ingredient in love-potions. The mandrake, which is still worn in France as a love-charm, was in demand for the same purpose because, writes Gerarde, 'it hath been thought that the root hereof serveth to win love.' He also speaks of the carrot as 'serving for love-matters,' and adds, that the root of the wild species is more effectual than that of the garden. The root of the male fern was in olden times much sought for in the preparation of love-philtres, and hence the following allusion:

'Twas the maiden's matchless beauty
That drew my heart a-nigh;
Not the fern-root potion,
But the glance of her blue eye.

Among further plants employed for the same purpose may be mentioned the crocus, purslane, and periwinkle; while the leaves of hemlock, dried and powdered and mixed in food or drink, were said to influence the affections of another. The well-known wild-flowers, Our Lady's Bed-straw and the Mallow were thought to possess the same property; and among the Scottish peasantry the roots of the orchis were dug up, and, when dried and ground, were secretly administered as a potion.

With the Indians, the mango is a favourite plant for the production of the love-philtre. Tradition tells how once upon a time a young girl plucked one of its blossoms and offered it to Cupid, uttering these words:

God of the bow, who with spring's choicest flowers
Dost point the five unerring shafts; to thee
I dedicate this blossom; let it serve
To barb thy truest arrow; be its mark
Some youthful heart that pines to be beloved.

Other plants equally in request are the lotus and the champak, the latter being a plant of the greatest rarity. The jasmine, too, is reputed to be all-potent in love-matters; and it may be remembered how Moore represents the enchantress Namouna, who was skilled in all manner of charms and talismans, instructing Nourmahal to gather at midnight certain blossoms which would have the effect, when twined into a wreath, of recalling her Selim's love. Accordingly, the flowers having been duly gathered as directed, the enchantress Namouna, whilst singing the following invocatory lines, weaves the mystic chaplet which is to have such wondrous influence:

The image of love, that nightly flies
To visit the bashful maid,
Steals from the jasmine flower, that sighs
Its soul, like hers, in the shade.
The dream of a future or happier hour,
That alights on Misery's brow,
Springs out of the almond silvery flower,
That blooms on a leafless bough.

Beans are said to have been accounted efficacious as love-philtres. The case is recorded of an old woman who was scourged through the city of Cremona for having endeavoured to conciliate the affections of a young man through the medium of some beans over which mass had been

celebrated. Indeed, all kinds of ingredients seem to have been used in the preparation of these amatory spells, and it is recorded how a young woman in the seventeenth century was indicted by the legal authorities of Leipsic for administering a love-philtre composed of bread, hair, and nails, to a man, whom it sickened.

Occasionally, in foreign countries, confidence was reposed in the power of written charms, which were administered in drink or food to the person whose love it was desired to secure. In some cases, it would seem, such philtres were considered to have the desired effect without being swallowed. Thus, St Jerome relates how a young man passionately enamoured of a damsel of Gaza, having failed in the usual amatory charms, repaired to the priests of Esculapius at Memphis, from whom he acquired magical faculties. Returning after a year's absence, he introduced certain mystical words and figures sculptured on Cyprian brass beneath the lady's door. This contrivance had the desired effect, for soon she began to rave on his name, 'to wander with uncovered head and dishevelled hair, for she had become distracted through the vehemence of love.' But in cases of this kind there was not always the same success. We are told, for instance, how a Norwegian peasant whose suit had been rejected sought to inspire the lady he loved with corresponding affection by mystical means. So he carved certain Runic characters on pieces of wood; but not being sufficiently skilful in this mode of talismanic science, instead of furthering his purpose, he did the reverse, and threw the damsel into a dangerous illness. Fortunately, a northern chief witnessing her sufferings, and hearing that Runic characters had been carved, sculptured those that he considered more appropriate, which being laid beneath her pillow, soon restored her to convalescence.

Oftentimes philtres were expressly given to counteract the effects of love, and to soothe the susceptibilities of those who were suffering from misapplied affection. Thus the *Savva Indica*, a species of the willow, one of the sacred plants of India, had the reputation of driving away all feelings of love; and the amaranth was thought to be a good antidote to love. The water-lily was supposed to possess a similar property, and the *Agnus castus* was given to calm despairing lovers. In short, there was no lack of expedients resorted to in bygone years either for inspiring or dispelling love, many an amusing instance being given in our old romances and fairy tales. Such a practice may seem ludicrous in the present age; but it cannot be forgotten how great a hold it once had on the popular mind. How far this was due to the stories circulated, is a matter of uncertainty; but tales like the following one, handed down with every semblance of truth, no doubt largely helped to propagate a piece of folly which was once productive of so many mischievous effects. The story goes that Charlemagne was enamoured of a very unattractive woman, whose corpse at her death he would not quit. Archbishop Turpin, suspecting sorcery, searched the body, and underneath the tongue found a ring. This he put on his own finger, whereupon the monarch became strangely attached to the Archbishop, who flung the ring into the lake

near Aix. But the mysterious influence of the ring did not cease, for the king became so enamoured of the lake that he built a palace on its shore, where he spent the remainder of his life.

'SUMAJH.'

'HENDERSON, what's the meaning of "Sumajh," eh? Early this morning I was wandering about a mile out on the Kistapore Road, just on the edge of the jungle, you know, and ran across some ten or a dozen natives in a ring around a poor wretch of a leper. Ugh! he's the first I've seen, and he made me feel bad, I can tell you; I don't want to see any more.'

'Hah!' broke in Henderson; 'and how do you know the man was a leper, if you had never seen one before, eh?'

'Oh, he was a leper right enough—there was a horrible grayish scaly look about him, and he was bloated, and his arms were only stumps, and'—

'That's enough—I pass,' said Henderson quickly, with a shudder.

'Well, this leper seemed to be asking a great favour of the other fellows—imploping them to do something, you know—and they didn't want to; and the poor chappie turned from one to the other and moaned and cried; and well, upon my word, Henderson, what with the sight of him and what with his pitiful entreaties, I felt—well—I couldn't see quite straight for a little while. And look here; I thought lepers weren't allowed to come near anybody?'

'Hm.' Henderson's face assumed a puzzling expression, half-pitying, half-stern, as he rose from the camp-chair in which he was lolling. Placing his hands on my shoulders and looking into my eyes, he went on: 'So you want to know the meaning of that word, do you?—Let's see; how long have you been grilling in this devil's kitchen, eh?'

'Nearly five weeks,' replied I, surprised at the peculiar hardness of his voice; for Henderson, I had already seen for myself, was big brother to all the children of the cantonment.

'So; five weeks.' His voice assumed a satirical tone. 'Five weeks—and you don't know the language yet! You're very slow for a competition wallah. And what *did* you understand of the conversation between your leper and his friends, eh?'

'Why,' said I, bridling up somewhat, 'I learned a good bit of the language before I came out, and I know as much of it now, I'll guarantee, as the average man does after he's been here a couple of years.'

'Modest,' dryly ejaculated Henderson, waiting for an answer to his question.

'Oh, I understood it all right enough except that blessed word "sumajh." It was wrapped up in very figurative language—calling the earth his mother, and the sun his father, and all that sort of stuff, you know. He wanted them to do "sumajh" for him; but it seemed as if they were half afraid to do whatever it means. In the end, though, they gave way; and the poor chap was wonderfully pleased, for he held his wasted arms to the sky and invoked blessings on them, and

then crouched down and kissed the earth; and finally burst out into a sort of song that didn't go very far before it faded away into a dismal croak that was painful to listen to. I couldn't stand it any longer, and came away.

'So; that's all you know about it, is it? Well, youngster, take my advice—and it's good, too—don't poke your nose into the natives' business. Let them alone as much as you can. Cultivate a convenient memory when you're reading the regulations about them. Remember, that the men who make most of those rules don't have to keep them; and between you and me, their knowledge of the theory of government is only excelled by their ignorance of the practice of it. As for that word you're so curious about, forget it, and don't hear it again—understand? With that, he went out abruptly.

I was greatly perplexed. Half the night I pondered over Henderson's strange conduct, and wondered why on earth he should refuse to tell me the meaning of a simple word. I did not care to ask any one else, for fear of its getting to Henderson's ears. Although I was on pretty familiar terms with him, he was my chief, and in addition I had already become much attached to him.

The next morning, I tackled him again: 'Henderson—that word?'

He turned and gazed at me with half-closed eyes, and said deliberately and coldly: 'The keenness of your curiosity would do infinite credit to a corporal's wife.' He cleared his throat and said testily: 'Picnic, picnic; that's what the word means; he wanted them to treat him to a picnic in the jungle; and you say they consented. And—he turned on me quite fiercely—'why shouldn't they? And look here, my boy, if you say one word about it to any one else in the cantonment, I'll make it warm for you.'

I was hurt and angry, and gave Henderson a wide berth for the rest of the day.

In the evening I strolled down the Kistapore Road. It was against the regulations, for the jungle ran right up to the road, and at night there was a certain amount of danger to be feared from the wild beasts that occasionally explored the road almost up to the cantonment. But even in my brief experience I had seen the spirit, if not the letter, of one or two of the regulations ignored; and I wanted to be alone to think out the meaning of Henderson's strange words and manner.

It was almost the last of the few brief moments of twilight, when, being still some couple of miles from home, I quickened my pace. The night was falling as only those can understand who have witnessed a nightfall on the edge of the jungle. No need to tell them how the darkness drops down like a heavy blanket, nor of the startling transformation of the tangled underwood and the gigantic grasses which suddenly become strange monsters endowed with life; moving to and fro, now smoothly, now jerkily; pointing with strange fingers; now uttering husky cries of hate, now gibbering idiot-like. And the wild animals in the thickens of the interior, how they howl, and shriek, and cry, and moan—roars of defiance, screams of pain, trumpetings of victory! All made more intense by being subdued, as if the vegetation were unwilling to let

the outside world know of the scenes enacted in that fearsome place.

I confess I started to run, holding my revolver at the full cock. But my steps were suddenly arrested by the magical appearance, directly in my path, of several lights. I pulled up sharply, and stood stock-still. The lights advanced, keeping time with the thumping of my heart. At last I could dimly descry a body of twenty or thirty natives, several of whom were carrying torches, which they must have just lighted. I awaited their coming not without trepidation, for I could not imagine what they were about. Just before reaching me, however, they turned quickly aside into the jungle. They were not five paces distant from me when they left the road, and I felt some surprise at their not having seen me. By a sudden overpowering impulse of curiosity, I started to follow them, in order to learn the meaning of their strange journey. With as little noise as possible, I swung round, stepping almost in their footsteps. I had little difficulty in doing so, for they followed what seemed to be a beaten track. For some hundreds of yards the strange procession went slowly on. Suddenly I heard a strange noise, that thrilled me through and through. There was something about it, too, that seemed familiar; but my brain was excited and refused to recall the sound. It was a kind of moan, half human, half animal. As the natives and I drew nearer, it took the character of a chant; and then it flashed on me that I had heard the sound before; it was the leper's voice! The poor wretch was crooning a dismal hymn or invocation, just as he had done when soliciting his brethren to do what I was, to my great satisfaction, about to find out. His low, weak cry rang out strangely clear.

'Ohèi, Ohèi. Mother, my Mother. Thou only art merciful. Thou only. Ohèi, Ohèi. Brethren, my Brethren, lead me to our Mother; she only will welcome, she only will give peace. Ohèi, Ohèi.'

The voice died away in a moan, that mingled with and seemed to rise again in the soft whistling of the long grasses, as they quivered with the breath of the wind that presaged the coming rains. I shivered.

The party, having now arrived at a space which had been cleared of the tangle-wood and grass, abruptly stopped and formed into a ring. I pressed forward as near as I dared. Then I saw, in the centre of the ring, a large cavity, perhaps four feet deep, with the earth banked up on either side. The torch-bearers ranged themselves at the head and foot of the hole, which, now that it was in the light, I saw to be of oblong shape, shelving somewhat at the end nearer to me. The other natives stood at the sides, four with tom-toms, and two with little pots of burning incense. Then the leper limped out, from the jungle seemingly, and crouched at the shelving end of the hole. I had expected him to appear on the scene, yet when he did so, I could not help giving a bit of a start. Not one of the natives looked at the leper, nor did he seem to see them. As soon, however, as he approached, the whole of the natives set up a cry—subdued and dismal beyond description. The burden of it was something like this: 'To Thee who art all knowledge, all power, all love, all hate. To Thee, known only of Thy-

self. To Thee who art Life and Death. To Thee we bring our brother. He seeks Thee where Thou art. He comes to Thee. He comes to Thee.' Their voices and the noise of the tom-toms died down; and as they faded away, the leper, who had been beating time by nodding his head, crawled down the slope and squatted down on his haunches at the deep end of the hole. In a shrill, quavering voice that sounded strangely piercing on the electrically charged air, he took up the refrain.

'Ohèi, Ohèi. Fire of the Lightnings, I come. Cloudless brightness of the sky, I come. Winged Messenger of the Mountains, I come. Ohèi. I come!'

Then, amid more chanting and tom-tom beating, two of the natives handed the leper some liquid in a small bowl and some food. After drinking a little of the liquid and eating a little of the food, he cast the remainder into the hole in front of him, accompanying the action with subdued but intense cries.

But now several of the natives retired for a moment, returning with large flat pieces of wood. With these they started throwing earth into the hole. The leper did not move. Good God! They were going to bury the poor wretch alive! The thought in all its hideousness flashed through my brain. For the instant I went as cold as ice, and was unable to raise a finger. Only for a moment, though; and then, acting for the second time that night on the impulse of the moment, I dashed forward, my revolver still in my hand, to do—what, I could not tell. But before I had gone two steps, I found myself seized, disarmed, gagged, and pinioned. I struggled, or, rather, attempted to struggle, for I could neither move nor utter the slightest sound. I gave myself up for lost. I expected nothing but death, and I remember doing what I had not done for years: I offered up a prayer—incoherent and vague; but never was prayer more fervent. Contrary to my expectation, I was only dragged back several paces and tied hand and foot to what I suppose was a small tree. My captors had bound me with my back towards the leper, apparently determined that I should see nothing more of what was going on. However, by screwing my neck round I could just catch sight of the wretched creature in the pit that I now felt certain was to be his grave.

The horrible sight fascinated me. I had no thought for anything else. Even my own perilous situation caused me no more fear or anxiety. The natives, still singing that sad monotonous refrain, were now quickly throwing the earth round the leper. Quicker and quicker they shovelled, louder and louder they sang: 'Ohèi, Ohèi, thy wish is thine—is thine.' The four beating the tom-toms threw them down and joined in. The earth mounted higher and higher round the doomed man. It reached his breast: he waved his poor stumps of arms towards the sky; he patted the earth with them, as if he were fondling a loved one. It reached his shoulders—he bent his head and kissed it passionately.

Oh, that scene!—the natives casting in the earth with frenzied energy; the torch-bearers standing like bronze statues, their torches throwing a red glare on the leper's head, now fast disappearing as if sinking in a pool of blood. Then,

oh God! the earth crept up to his mouth, his nostrils. . . . With a convulsive effort I shut my eyes.

In another moment the noise of the shovelling and singing ceased. My eyes involuntarily opened, just in time to see the torch-bearers thrusting their torches into the earth heaped up over the grave; they gave an angry splutter and then went out. For an instant there was utter darkness and silence. Then came the crowning horror. A vivid flash of lightning lit up the scene. It seemed to hang over the spot. And while the natives were thus enveloped with the ghastly hue of death, I heard—I vow I heard—muffled and faint as the shriek of a gagged man, *the cry of the leper*—the echo of a Voice—the echo of a Life! Louder and louder grew that terrible voice; it roared like a cataract, like a thousand peals of thunder; it became a thing—tangible, palpable—filling the universe, pressing on my brain—crushing it—till at last something snapped, and I knew no more!

Three weeks afterwards I woke up. I was lying on a bed in my quarters. Henderson was bending over me; he raised his hand to prevent my speaking, saying, with a queer little smile: 'Yes, yes—keep quiet; a touch of jungle fever, my boy, that's all—a trifle heady; you'll be all right again in a jiffy.'

That 'jiffy' was nearly three months long.

HER ATTRACTIONS.

She has no dazzling charms, no classic grace,
Nothing, you think, to win men's hearts about her;
Yet, looking at her sweet and gentle face,
I wonder what our lives would be without her!

She has no wish in the great world to shine;
For work outside a woman's sphere, no yearning;
But on the altar of home's sacred shrine
She keeps the fire of pure affection burning.

We tell our griefs into her patient ear;
She whispers 'Hope!' when ways are dark and dreary;
The little children like to have her near,
And run into her open arms when weary.

Her step falls lightly by the sufferer's bed;
Where poverty and care abound, she lingers;
And many a weary heart and aching head
Find gifts of healing in her tender fingers.

She holds a helping hand to those who fall,
Which gently guides them back to paths of duty;
Her kindly eyes, with kindly looks for all,
See in uncomeliest souls some hidden beauty.

Her charity would every need embrace;
The shy and timid fear not to address her;
With loving tact she rightly fills her place,
While all who know her pray that Heaven may bless her!

E. MATHESON.

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WINTER FARING.

WHEN the berries glow in the hedgerow and the holly is red, a feast is spread for hungry birds who will be cut off from one of their principal food-supplies while the ground is sealed by winter frosts. The birds that live on the light-winged summer insects are for the most part those small travellers that fly away in the autumn from the changeable climates of northern lands to enjoy the warm winters of the sunnier south—away, away, thousands of miles, not led by any romantic desire for change, as some have thought, nor even, so far as we can read between the lines in the journals of bird-migration, in search of warmth, but driven by the stern necessity of gaining a living to seek those spots where insects come out to be caught by the birds winter and summer alike.

Our summer migrants do not depend on the wild fruits for their winter food, though some of them take a small share of hedge and woodland harvest before they go; indeed, the warblers, the whitethroats, and the blackcaps eat more than their share, considering how important these crops are to those who stay behind. One can scarcely blame them, however, for the thrushes and blackbirds and jays and starlings—birds that will be entirely dependent on these stores when the frost sets in—show them such a bad example. While yet the ground is soft and worms and grubs are to be had for the asking, they begin to make raids upon the berries in a most improvident manner, without a thought of the hard times that are coming. It makes thrifty folk like the butcher-bird and the nuthatch quite angry to see the rowan trees stripped and the elder bushes robbed in the early autumn, and the brown owl and the sparrow-hawk look on with a grim smile; hungry thrushes are very good game later on.

It is only when berries are scarce, though, that the birds suffer for this extravagance; often there is enough fruit to allow of a little recklessness; life is easier low down on the ladder; wild

creatures do not need to take care of the pence. There are some berries that garner themselves for a later store by not ripening until the early spring. Not until the end of February or the beginning of March will the birds begin to eat the bitter black fruits of the ivy and privet, if they can help it; there are often some of these left for the blackcap when he comes home to sing his beautiful song in April; and unpopular fruits, like the spindle-shaped eglets, and the round red balls on the sweet white rose briars, often remain untouched.

Very seldom, indeed, is there famine among birds, the wild harvests are so plenteous in their abundance, the garnerers of wood, hedgerow, and hillside so well stored. There are rich red bunches under the spiked holly leaves, bushels of these in a single copse; there are hips and haws in the tangled hedge, millions scattered and clustered; there are heavy loads of the beautiful pink berries, so strangely shaped, crowning the stiff stems of the wayfaring tree; and the graceful branches of the mountain ash bend under the weight of countless clusters of vermilion beads; there are berries on the mistletoe bough, on the ivy that wreathes the old trees, on the yews, the elders, the privets, the sloes, the junipers; there are barberries, bilberries, cranberries, whortleberries; berries of all shapes and sizes; berries black, purple, blue, white, crimson, scarlet, pink, orange, yellow, green; berries soft and hard, sweet and bitter, early and late. Could a year's produce of berries be gathered and weighed, the sum of them would sound fabulous; it would need all the hill fairies and all the wood-nymphs to gather them, and the giants of old to come back and weigh them out, such hundreds of thousands of tons of berries spread over the country to feed the birds.

Nearly all the birds that spend the winter in Britain avail themselves of this provision, with the exception of those that dwell on the sea-shores and the mud-flats of river estuaries, where the abundant supplies of fish, molluscs, marine insects, and their larvæ, never fail, and are

seldom shut up out of reach of the birds by long-continued frosts. Always there are some birds in the berry-laden trees and shrubs; but when the snow has fallen thickly and wrapped itself round and about every fallow land and grassy field, or a hard frost has set in, and the ice-king has locked up all the birds' earthly feeding-grounds with one turn of his silver key—then, if you would see all sorts and conditions of birds, look among the berries. The thrushes come in from the fields to the hedges and copses in large flocks, and with them bring their Scandinavian cousins, the fieldfares and redwings that visit them every winter. The blackbirds desert the garden beds, where, while the weather was 'open,' they found ample food in the slugs and snails, and fly to the hollies and elders and hawthorns for their daily bread. The fierce and greedy missel-thrushes, who, later on, in the spring will plunder the nests and eat the eggs and the young birds of even their own kith and kin, must content themselves with a diet of rowan berries, and the white balls of the parasitic plant whence their name. If the vegetarian theory of the wholesome moral influence of a vegetable diet is correct, the pugnacious temper of the mistletoe bird should be improved by abstinence; but it is only too evident that he comes forth quite undisciplined by his long fast. Listen to the shrill screams of two of these birds as they wrangle for the biggest berry; it might as well be a fat worm or a young blackbird; but let this pass, or we shall entangle the bird in the vain old disputation of whether circumstances rule character, or character regulates circumstances, and lose him from ornithological circles.

Surely no bird-lover could find fault with any of the interesting family of thrushes: think of how much they contribute to the joy of summer—pouring forth wild imaginings from gracious shades in wild and desultory strains; think of how they enliven the dreary fields and gardens in winter, as in graceful flocks they wander to and fro. Birds, flitting, soaring, wandering birds, so winning, so wonderful in all their ways, appeal to the poetry in us. It would spoil half our pleasure in sweet simple birds to look too searchingly into their moral status or regard them as responsible beings. A thousand apologies to any thrush for having called him anything but a thing of beauty, a joy for ever, when the fields are drear and the berries red.

The ring-ousels leave the bare hillsides when berries begin to ripen, and come to the woods and hedges where they grow. These, like the blackbirds, bear the name of 'merrill,' the deserving one, truly merited by their melodious voices; more rich and pure than that of the song-thrush, though not so varying the strain; more powerful than the redwing's, and yet as delicate. There is a ring, a thrill, in the voices of the blackbird and the ring-ousel like the *vox humana* on a sweet-toned organ.

The beautiful jay is fond of berries; and if the supply fails in the woods where he dwells in ambush, he will venture forth into the open country for a meal among the hips and haws in the hedges; or even come to the gardens for the fruits of fancy shrubs. The jay is a shy bird, for all his pert chattering and mimicking; but who can wonder at his startled fugitive flight,

and his timid retreat into the depths of the wood? Is he not one of the pariah birds who hang with the owl, the hawk, the rook, and the magpie, on the keeper's gibbet? Like the others, who are persecuted for an occasional breach of the game-laws, the jay is most useful in keeping in check such truly mischievous creatures as insects, worms, and mice, and should be protected for this as well as for its beauty. It is one of the few brilliantly-coloured birds left to us, and, like the kingfisher and the green woodpecker, is becoming rarer. Once upon a time—it sounds like a fairy tale—there were many such birds among our fauna. The roller, the bee-eater, the golden oriole, the hoopoe are almost gone; surely we should try to preserve those that remain.

The whole tribe of finches have tried to claim kinship with the jay, on what pretext it is hard to say; but this they have in common—both like berries. Even the rarer marsh and cole tits may be seen on the ornamental shrubs close to a house; the antics of the great tit and the tiny blue-bonnet are most graceful and nimble as they climb from twig to twig, sucking the ripe fruit, and throwing the skins to the ground.

Wherever good cheer is spread, the sparrows go to make the feast merrier. When the wheat-harvest is over and they have gleaned the last grain from the corn-fields, the sparrows desert the open land and the fields where the grass seeds have sunk into the ground, and repair to tree and bramble to eat the wild-fruits. There they find great numbers of their old friends from the chimney tops—the starlings, who depend greatly upon the bountiful store of berries for their winter faring—that is, those who do not get so far as our south-western shores. Enormous flocks of starlings travel westward every winter, and settle in immense numbers upon the coast of Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall. This is one of those partial but regular migrations common to most of the birds who spend the winter in their own country. The starlings that go to the seaside are almost independent of berries, for the abundant supply of marine insects seldom if ever falls short.

Still more hungry birds for the berries to feed. The finches and buntings, some of them like the fieldfares and redwings, bird refugees from the reign of terror in the far north, abound in our fields and lanes. They are easily seen in the leafless trees and the bare thickets as they pick the hips and haws, the elder-berries and the sloes. The fine bullfinch, seldom visible in the thick foliage of summer, is conspicuous in tall hedges, where stripped branches reveal its nest. Wood-pigeons alight in flocks where berries grow; big birds as well as little birds trench on their store; and on the hills where the wild game-birds assemble their thinned ranks, packs of grouse and smaller companies of capercaillie with ptarmigan and blackcock, burrow in the deep snows for fallen bilberries, cranberries, and whortleberries. Some of these fruits—as, indeed, most of the smaller fruits which come under the title of berry—are very acid, and the game-birds are said to grow thin in the districts where these grow in plenty as the season advances, and they are dependent on them for food.

Many berries hang on the trees till the spring, some even longer, like the juniper, which is not

considered fit for flavouring gin until two seasons have gone towards ripening it; even where the plants seem bare there is a goodly supply strewn on the earth.

In the wooded countries bordering on the Arctic Circle, where dense forests stretch unbroken for miles and miles, and thick and varied undergrowths of bush and bramble cast their fruit, silence falls soon after the berries begin to ripen. Nearly all the teeming myriads of birds whose summer home is there have migrated to warmer latitudes, and the field is left to a few fierce eagles and falcons, whose meat is something stronger than berries. The berries are left, and preserved by the covering of thick dry snow, they are kept safe until May or June, when the countless hosts of travelling birds go home again and find them. Many different kinds of birds, and many different in their choice of food in better times, must look to the berries for winter fare, and especially in frosty weather. Even a few of the hard-billed birds, who, like the hawfinch, crack the stones of the hips and haws and eat the kernel, are glad of the berries. It would make a very long list to mention each and all of the plants that bear fruit for the birds. The guelder-rose, the yew, and the skewer tree, whose wood is so hard that the gypsies use it to make pegs, are favourites, as well as those already referred to; and besides all these, many another bush and bramble contribute to the feast.

All through the winter we may look for birds where berries grow, and find them; there is an old saying that on Christmas Day the birds sit in the bush with the bleeding breast; so they do, and in many another fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, when the holly is red in winter-time.

F. A. FULCHER.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER VIII.—AT THE GREAT WHITE FEAST.

In a few seconds Euphemia came and released Ainsworth from his embarrassing confinement. She laughed at his serious and wondering face, thinking it was due to anxiety lest she should not find him.

'But,' said she, peeping round the magnolia, 'you might have got out through the drawing-room: I see the door is open.'

'Oh yes,' said he; 'I daresay I might have got out through the drawing-room.'

He helped her to collect and to carry out such flowering plants as she selected, but all in so absent-minded a way that still she laughed and chaffed him; and he smiled and bore it, for he was so possessed and interpenetrated with the glow of his new feeling that he was insensible to the shafts of ridicule. He was in love, and love was in him, and he knew it. For let it be noted that there is an important difference in what are called 'affairs of the heart' between most men and women. Man as man is open, direct, and simple in his feelings; woman as woman is secret, involved, and complex. So it comes to pass that when a man is really touched with love's fitful fever he is commonly able to diagnose himself;

he knows what is the matter with him and acts accordingly. A woman, on the other hand, seldom recognises when she is in love; she may be very far gone, plunged beyond hope of recovery, and yet not know it; and even when she may suspect where she is, she clouds, obfuscates, or glozes the fact to herself, and calls it something else—until the man speaks, and then!—

Thus the twinge caused by the talk overheard in the conservatory had made Ainsworth recognise what had happened to him, and, recognising it, he was resolved to win the only assuagement possible: the love of the woman who had touched his heart. Isabel, on her part, was troubled and distressed at what had occurred; she saw no reason, nor had she the inclination, to blame Ainsworth for it; but she began from that hour to take more note of him, to underline, so to say, her interest in him, without in the least suspecting what had happened, or was happening, to herself.

In something less than half an hour Ainsworth's journeyings with Euphemia and the flower-pots to and from the marquee were at an end, the tables were set forth, and the guests were all assembled, and were settling down into their places; then he chanced to glance across a space of table and he suddenly came to himself. He knew that a man whom he felt must have been he, had been for some time hurrying to and fro, but whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell, and what he had been doing he could not tell; now, however, he saw plainly where he was and knew clearly who he was; for there, a little way off on the other side of the table, stood she—the one *she* in the world for him!—her face flushed and smiling above her white diaphanous raiment, and her eyes sparkling like glorious jewels beneath her crown of dark hair. She was in reality just as she had been half an hour before, save, perhaps, for the new animation of her bearing; but to Ainsworth's inspired eyes she appeared transfigured into a vision of the supremest loveliness of life and health, of body and mind. The sight of her intoxicated and dazzled him, till she glanced his way and their eyes met, when the frank intelligence and confidence of her look soothed and steadied him.

There was neither time nor opportunity then for other communication; for part of the fun and formula of that feast was that the chief members of the household and the chief guests must act as stewards. At the head of one table Suffield generously carved a great joint of beef; at the head of the second his son carved another joint; and at a third the mistress of the house herself dispensed smaller dishes; while her daughter and her niece, Lord Clitheroe and Mr Ainsworth, the clergyman of the church and the minister of the chapel and their 'respectable' wives—as Daniel would have said—aided the domestics of the house, hung round the tables, and saw that the feasters had what they desired to eat and drink. In passing thus to and fro, Ainsworth hovered near Isabel's sacred presence; yet not too near, nor even as near as he might have gone, for he felt there was a line to pass beyond which would have been familiar, if not rude. The feasters were all heads of households in the village—fathers and mothers, and some grandfathers and grandmothers; for the unmarried and the young were

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still kicking their heels outside, waiting for their turn at the tables, even as they were waiting for their complete innings at life. While the elder people still kept their seats and the younger still hung outside, a foreman got upon his feet to propose the health of 'oor mester and mistress'; and Suffield responded in a speech which took and held Ainsworth's attention. He had never before had the opportunity of considering his friend as a public speaker, and now as he listened he was surprised and delighted to think he had in him the essentials of a popular orator. He spoke clearly, in simple, straightforward language, with unconscious dignity and sweetness of temper, and with feeling and humour; so that his audience followed him with cheerful understanding, and now felt the springing of moisture to the eyes and now broke into the heartiest laughter. His anecdotes were naturally the best appreciated parts of his speech: to that audience they were as the plums of a pudding; for they were told in the strong and racy Lancashire dialect—which it would be impossible to reproduce here intelligibly—and they were seized on by the untravelled and unlearned natives as their exclusive property. While they roared with laughter, they glanced round upon their attendant superiors with the clear meaning in their eyes: 'What do you think of that for a story? Of course you don't understand it; but we do.'

Ainsworth paid heed to all these things, and in so doing he moved—perhaps not quite unwittingly—closer to Isabel. When the speech was finished and the cheering had ceased, he was fluttered and delighted anew by her turning to him with a gracious smile and a divine blush, and saying on the impulse: 'What a delightful speech! Don't you think so? I had no idea that Uncle George was so good a speaker.'

'Nor I,' answered Ainsworth with pleased alacrity, and his words came in a nervous, hurried stream. 'It is a model speech for the occasion—simple, pathetic, and humorous. And such capital stories he told! I didn't understand them a bit myself—I haven't Lancashire enough, though I am half a Lancashire man—but I saw they were caught and understood by all the folk. An admirable speech! Mr Suffield ought to become a great platform orator.'

'Do you think so really?' asked Isabel with a touch of deference, as if to better-instructed opinion than her own. 'I should like to hear him make a speech in parliament.'

'Ah,' said Ainsworth, 'I believe that's not quite the same thing; I don't know of myself, but I've always heard that. A man may be an admirable platform speaker, and quite fail as a speaker in the House: I can quite understand that; can't you?'

'Oh yes. Just as a clergyman may be a very good preacher, but a duffer—duffer is the word, is it not?—(He laughed more hilariously than was quite necessary)—a duffer when he gets up to speak among his brethren.'

'That's it. You put it excellently. Of course I don't mean that Mr Suffield would be a failure; but, as you so well said, success of the one kind doesn't necessarily imply success of the other.'

With a woman's fine intuition, Isabel perceived his nervous eagerness to please, and in a measure understood its cause. She, therefore, became more

self-possessed, indulgent, and expansive, though she did not dare to let the talk drop, for fear of the reflection that might spring up in the pause.

'I can't,' said she, 'know so much of these things as you'—

'But why not?' he interrupted. 'You seem to me to be thoroughly acquainted with everything, and to be able to set men right in many things—you do.'

'Really, Mr Ainsworth,' she laughed—a laugh which showed that the praise, though extravagant, was agreeable—'if I could believe you mean what you say, I should be puffed up with conceit.'

'But I *do* mean what I say—I mean everything that I say,' he urged fervently.

'And so you are waiting to see me puffed up?'—she laughed again.

'No, no, no; you are too wise, you have too much ballast to be puffed up.'

'You mean,' said she, 'that I am too wise to be puffed up, and even if I were puffed up, I have too much ballast to be carried away? Really, really, Mr Ainsworth, your compliment after all proves gross and equivocal!'

'You are right, you are right, of course. But at the same time you prove the truth of what I said—that you can set men right in many things—don't you see?—But you were going to say something when I interrupted you.'

'Oh, I was going to say only that, though I know nothing of politics, I think it is possible that Uncle George may be a success in parliament. He will try hard to be, I know, for my aunt has that ambition for him, and he always likes to please her.'

'That's very beautiful of him, now!' exclaimed he—'after so many years of married life!'

'Yes,' said she, as if she had been suddenly provoked to consider the point, 'I suppose it is.'

'Not many couples, I fancy,' said he, 'have such confidence and belief in each other after a quarter of a century of marriage.'

'No; I daresay not,' said she, and showed an inclination to plunge into a reverie on the matter. But she shook off the inclination, and said: 'That's chiefly why uncle has taken a great house in London.'

'Oh,' exclaimed he. 'Has he taken a house in London?'

'Didn't you know?' said she. 'The town-house of Lord Clitheroe's father, the Earl of Padiham. And the family is going to live there regularly—except George: he is going to remain here and manage all the business, I believe.'

While the conversation had been in progress, faint blushes had been coming and going on Isabel's countenance, but on the chance mention of George's name, a blinding blush swept over her, making her look down in confusion and Ainsworth look away in sympathy. He relieved her, however, by continuing the talk without heeding what she had said of George.

'I'm going to London, too,' said he.

'Are you really?' she asked, with a quick look of lively interest. 'I had not heard of it before.'

'I only resolved on it to-day,' said he; and added hurriedly, on the sudden fear that she would connect his resolution with the scene in the conservatory, 'I've had a word or two with

my editor, and I've practically no alternative but resign my post: I must either change my style of criticism or go. I prefer to go.'

'Of course,' said Isabel, at length showing that unconsciousness of herself which was one of her chief charms.

'I hope,' said he, 'when we are both in London I shall often have the pleasure of meeting you.'

'No doubt we shall meet,' said she, looking thoughtful. 'But—excuse my saying it—I hope you have something in prospect in London.'

'Well,' said he with a laugh, 'I believe there are ever so many birds in the bush, though I confess I have not one in the hand.'

'You have the Lancashire bird still in your hand—have you not?' she said.

'You mean to suggest,' said he, 'that I am not wise in letting it go? There are risks, of course; but every movement is attended with some risk, and—he continued with intention—'I have reached a point in my life when I prefer to run a risk. But, after all, from my position on *The Lancashire Gazette*, I am not quite prospectless; and Mr Suffield has given me encouragement.'

'Uncle George,' said Isabel, 'is always so good.' 'He is absolutely the best man I know,' said Ainsworth.

And thus the conversation came to an end with the recurrence of their duties as stewards; so that it seemed all the more to Ainsworth like an interlude of heavenly music in the commonplace jangle and dull jar of average daily duty. The second relay of feasters had taken the places of the first while our pair were talking, and now they were completely settled and eager for the good things of the Suffield dispensation to be set before them. The second turn at the tables passed like the first, and then the feasters rose and went forth to play. When they were gone, Ainsworth, finding himself at length hungry, proffered a request to Miss Raynor, near whom he still maintained himself.

'Do you think,' said he, 'that I might have something to eat? I've had no lunch.'

'Certainly,' said she at once. 'I suppose aunt must have thought you had lunch in town. We had luncheon early and quick to be ready for this.'

She ran off to her aunt and presently returned, saying that she was deputed to attend to his wants.

That would be scarcely worth chronicling were it not that 'the green-eyed monster' was looking forth from young George Suffield's countenance, with consequences that shall duly appear. All the while Ainsworth and Isabel had conversed, George had observed them, and thought with a pang that they seemed very friendly and pleased with each other; and now that they went together to a side-table, while all were fast withdrawing from the marquee, and sat down, Ainsworth to eat and drink, and both to talk, the green-eyed monster's wasting heart beat in George's bosom in place of the young man's own honest organ. He could hear before he also withdrew that they were only talking of things literary and dramatic, but still they appeared to him more friendly and better pleased with each other than was necessary.

Something less than half an hour later Ainsworth was passing alone from the marquee to where the Whitsuntide revellers were romping and

playing, when he was suddenly reminded of the purpose with which he had entered Holdsworth Park. Amid the new emotions and events of the past hour or two, he had forgotten the existence of the black man, till now he saw him again pass blandly across his vision. He also was moving towards the crowd of holiday-makers; but he halted a little way off and stood with his black hands behind him, smiling and nodding indulgently, like a comment and a query of the ancient and mysterious East concerning the youthful, rude, and noisy West. Ainsworth passed him quickly by; and thinking of what Isabel had told him of George's approaching investiture with supreme authority at the mills, to George Suffield he immediately went. He was somewhat puzzled with his reception. George was commonly very cordial with him; he was now cold: he was commonly frank and talkative; he was now silent and suspicious. But Ainsworth set his changed behaviour down to the account of the scene in the conservatory, and forgave him.

'Do you know,' he asked, 'that black man standing over there?'

'Yes, of course,' answered George; 'he's my uncle's servant.'

'Oh, then,' said Ainsworth, 'perhaps you know of his having been in one of your mills—the special one against the dam—an hour or two ago?'

'Been where?' asked George, at length giving his real attention.

Then Ainsworth related what he had seen; and George without remark and without hesitation called Daniel, who came at once to the summons.

'Where were you two hours ago, Trichy?' asked George.

'Sahib George,' began Daniel, with a careless sidelong regard upon Ainsworth from his fine orbs, 'it is troublesome to remember all and many things; but the same time I must say that I have been taking myself for much interval for agreeable walks in the respected places of interest—in the valley with the waters and the animals with long back legs, etcetera.'

'Have you been in the mill by the lake?—on the brink of the dam?'

'Where is the mill? Where is the lake? Where is the—what?' asked Daniel with a smile—a smile of ingenious Eastern subtlety. 'I am regret to say that an Englishman says "damn" to turn away his feeling, but I am not sufficient to understand the meaning of the other. What is "dam" now?'

'Have you been in any of the mill-buildings in the valley?' asked George weakly.

'With regard may I say—is it able to enter myself in any of your English buildings when they are closed without the key? Have I the favour of the key? So just may I ask where can I be?'

'Answer me "Yes" or "No,"' persisted George: 'have you been in any of the buildings? Yes or No?'

'No, Sahib George,' answered Daniel, directly enough, and with the fullest, steadiest eye imaginable.

'There; you hear,' said George to Ainsworth; and adding with a bitter kind of enjoyment that surprised himself, 'I have no doubt: "Don't you think you might have been mistaken? People are

so often mistaken in what they fancy they have heard and understood; and if the ears should deceive you so much, why should not the eyes?"

'I don't think,' said Ainsworth, the more obstinately because of the singular tone of young Suffield's observation, 'that I can have been mistaken. I saw him as plainly as I see you.'

By that the eager conclave had naturally attracted attention, and seemed likely to attract an audience also.

'Anything the matter?' asked the elder Suffield, approaching with Uncle Harry, the Sahib Raynor.

'Only that Mr Ainsworth,' said George lightly, 'thinks he saw Trichy in the new mill.'

'But how could Trichy get in there?' asked Suffield.

'Ah, how!' asked George, in a semi-scoffing tone, which nettled Ainsworth.

'Of course,' said he, 'it does not matter to me; but I thought it of consequence to you, Mr Suffield; and I am completely certain I saw this—er—black—I mean, dark—gentleman in the new mill.'

'This is serious,' said Suffield; this must be inquired into?—What do you think, Harry?"

But before Uncle Harry could reply, George had again spoken, out of an absurd desire to oppose by any means, or to mitigate or make of no account, anything that Ainsworth might say.

'If the thing has been done, father,' said he, 'no inquiry can undo it. If the steed has been stolen, no inquiry into the question of whether the thief entered or no can bring the steed back. If Daniel Trichinopoly has been in that mill, then I suggest that the only remedy is to swear Daniel Trichinopoly into our service—to do his duty faithfully and to reveal no secrets of our business or of our manufacture.'

'Ah,' said Suffield, 'that sounds not a bad idea.—What do you think, Harry?"

'Oh,' said Uncle Harry, 'Daniel will swear.' Then he asked Daniel, in the man's native Tamil, if he would like to enter the Suffield service; to which Daniel replied in the same tongue that he would, and that he would be faithful as the ass that treadeth out the corn. ('The seed,' said he, 'of the banyan is small, but the tree gives a great shade.') 'He says he is willing and glad to enter your service, George. Take him by all means—with my blessing. Take him, and swear him in by any oath you like; they're all alike to him.—And,' continued the traveller to Daniel, 'come to me to-night, and we'll settle our accounts.'

'The Sahib,' said Daniel in his Tamil, bowing with his hands crossed upon his breast, 'is wise and comprehends. Having set out to run, is it well to be behind one who wishes to rest by the way? Moreover, as the Sahib knows, life without action is like a curry without *seeralam*.'

'It is well,' said Mr Raynor, also in Tamil. 'See that you maintain the hand of the diligent and the heart of the honest, or you will be as the hare that of its own accord ran into the cook-room.'

Having so said, he turned aside to receive a telegram brought by a servant; and thus on the prompting of a moment of pique and whim, without any reflection, was the dusky and mysterious Daniel enlisted in the service of the great house of Suffield.

Uncle Harry handed the telegram to his brother-in-law: it was an intimation from the Royal Geographical Society that Mr Raynor's promised lecture on his travels had been set down for an early date, and that his presence was desired to make the necessary arrangements as soon as possible.

'I shall go and pack at once,' said Uncle Harry, 'and catch the evening mail.—Come, Daniel.'

'You can surely wait till to-morrow, Harry,' said Suffield. 'I wanted you to make properly the acquaintance of my friend Ainsworth here—have a good talk with him, you know, and so on. And I was looking forward to a nice party at dinner.'

'I hope,' said Mr Raynor, turning frankly to Ainsworth, 'to have abundant opportunity to enjoy Mr Ainsworth's company in London.—And you know, George, I always like to carry out an intention while it's hot.'

'Ah, well,' said Suffield, 'if you must, you must. I know you're as ill to hold as a tewing horse.'

'And in any case, Mr Suffield,' said Ainsworth, 'I couldn't stay to dinner—as you have been kindly suggesting. I must get back to the office to my work.'

'Well, now,' said Suffield, 'this is what I call a miserably docked tail of a Whitsuntide festival.'

Ainsworth was a little sore about young George's behaviour towards him, and presently he said his adieu and departed to the station—not without hope of meeting Miss Raynor as he crossed the park. But, though he lingered and walked as wide as he dared, he saw nothing of her, and he returned to town in a somewhat despondent and lonely mood, but still resolved to sever his connection with *The Lancashire Gazette* at once.

OVENS AND STOVES.

CASTRÉN, the Finnish ethnologist, who travelled among the Lapps, Samoyeds, and Ostiaks, to collect vocabularies and compile grammars of their languages and dialects, describes the two sorts of huts which he found to be employed by the Lapps. One was oblong, with boarded shelves down the sides, that served as beds, and with a fire in the middle, the smoke of which escaped through a chimney in the roof, or rather an opening in the turf or hides with which the quadrangular huts were covered. The other sort of habitation was circular, and had this peculiarity, that the fire in it was lighted, and for a while allowed to burn, then extinguished; and when extinguished, the opening in the roof was closed, and the hut remained heated by the retention within of the warmth generated by the fire, and the exclusion of the cold outer air. In one kind of habitation the fire was kept burning constantly; in the other it was allowed to burn only for a while. Nevertheless, the latter habitation was the warmest of the two.

Curiously enough, precisely these same differences in employing fires exists in Europe. We in the British Isles follow the first method; so also do the French, so also the Italians. But the

Germans heat their houses on the other principle.

There can be no question whatever that the German method is most economical in fuel—not only so, but is the most effective for warming purposes—but then, it is open to the serious objection that it renders the ventilation not only incomplete but non-existent. A German porcelain stove consists of a fire-chamber, and of cells or passages of earthenware, through which flame and smoke are conducted in all directions, till a large portion of the heat is expended, and then the smoke is carried out of the stove into a small flue, that serves for a good many stoves in a good many rooms. A German house has usually but a single chimney, and into this chimney all the flues of the several rooms are carried. But that is not all. The fire is lighted, say, at seven o'clock in the morning, and is allowed to burn to eight o'clock. It is of billets of beechwood; and as soon as the one batch of firewood is consumed and the ashes are fairly dead, a damper is turned, that closes the flue, and the entire porcelain structure is converted into a great holder of hot air, that continues hot and pouring forth its heat into the apartment for some eight or ten hours. Then, when the room begins again to cool, a fresh fire is lighted, that blazes for half an hour, and smoulders for another half; after which the damper is again turned, and the room is hot for the rest of the evening and long into the night.

Firewood in Germany is very costly; coal also. The amount of firewood employed in an open farmhouse hearth in one day would last a German family a week. In Switzerland the same sort of stove is employed, so also in Piedmont. In Italy the only wood burnt is olive-wood, which is very expensive. At Rome a fire is seldom necessary; but it is otherwise at Milan, and at the latter place the close stove is employed; whereas farther south in Italy the open fireplace is usual. In Switzerland, wood is abundant, but it is pine and fir, and that wood is liable to fly and send its sparks over a floor, so that it is dangerous to employ this fuel in an open hearth. Moreover, in the cold of a Swiss winter, some better method of heating is required than the hearth. There can be no doubt that the close stove does economise heat and fuel enormously, but there can also be no doubt that a room so heated is liable to become close. It must become so, for every opening by which the vitiated air may escape is sedulously closed.

Castren in his *Travels* complains of having been obliged, when lodged in one of the 'smoke-huts,' to climb upon the roof as soon as he had let his fire out and plug the chimney with a wisp of rushes. He rejoiced on another occasion when given as his temporary lodging another in which he was able to close the chimney by pulling a rope that passed over a reel, and brought a plug of old rags into the orifice so as to close it. If the opening were not shut the hut chilled down at once. So with a German stove; unless the damper be turned, the room remains cold, all the heat of the stove, instead of radiating into the chamber, is carried up the chimney. We have known English families staying in hotels in Germany who were dismayed at their bill for fuel. A week's fuel equalled what they spent in

a month in England. This was because they kept the fire burning all day in the stove, never let it out, and never dreamed of turning the damper. The servants laughed, and wondered at the wastefulness of the English, and loudly protested it was a sin they were committing in throwing good heat away.

It is, as has been said, true that a German room becomes close where there is a stove. But this is rectified in a fashion by occasionally opening a pane or valve of the window. Fresh cold air rushes in in a moment and expels the heated and exhausted atmosphere. The window is instantly closed again, and in five minutes the room is as warm as it was before, for the stove is still radiating forth its heat.

There can be no question but that the ordinary grate with open fire is a most wasteful method of obtaining heat. That it forms an excellent ventilator of the apartment is a counterbalancing advantage. But the point to which we wish to direct attention is that the oven in which bread is baked, and the German stove, are but reproductions in small of the primitive habitation in which our and the German remote ancestors lived.

There can be very little doubt that the round oven is in miniature the primeval 'smoke-cabin.' It resembles it in shape, and it acts on precisely the same principle. In the 'smoke-cabin' the fire was made to roar in the midst till floor and walls and roof were heated, and then it was extinguished, and the orifice by which the smoke had escaped was closed. Our prehistoric ancestors then laid them down in the heated chamber and slept snugly all night. Probably at that time, if bread was baked, it was baked on hot stones; but when men came to live in better houses than these 'smoke-cabins'—beehive huts—they recalled how hot and baked they had been in them, and they constructed precisely similar structures on a smaller scale to serve for baking their bread and their meat. This is no mere surmise; there actually exist on the Cornish moors, side by side, the circular hut that was domed over and its smoke-hole closed after the extinction of the fire; and the oblong habitation with its rudely constructed ovens, built precisely like the former habitation in every particular save size. Nay, further, in some parts of England earthenware ovens are used in cottages, made in the potteries, on the same principle, and so like the primeval habitations that they might be taken as miniature representations of them. In the Kircherian Museum at Rome are some earthenware representations of Etruscan hovels found in a tomb in Etruria: they show us how the poorer classes made their habitations in a primitive period; it was very similar, with a small smoke-hole, to be closed when convenient. The walls were of clay, apparently; possibly the roof clay-plastered also. If so, the house was an oven in all but size.

The oblong habitation, with a fire kept continually burning, was a great advance on the circular hut. But as in Lapland now, so in the British Isles anciently, both sorts of habitation probably coexisted, and were in use simultaneously. The rich could maintain fires night and day, for they had fuel in abundance and serfs to collect it for them; but the poor man had to

economise his fuel, not so much because fuel was scarce, as because of the labour of felling and cutting timber, that interfered with his search after food.

The chimney is comparatively modern. Up to the period of the Wars of the Roses in England it was exceptional. In the halls the fire burnt on a hearth or in a brazier in the middle, and the smoke escaped through a louver in the roof. It was by this means that the college halls in our universities were warmed till within the memory of man. The louvers remain as ornamental architectural features, of no further practical use.

Old Holinshed says that colds in the head were unknown among the English till chimneys were introduced, which he says was not long before his time, 1570. He assures us that before chimneys were built fires were made against 'rere-dosses,' and the smoke got out how it could.

As already said, both kinds of huts and modes of heating were employed at the same time. Among the Scandinavians, both were employed in the same edifice. An ancient Icelandic house consisted of the hall, in which the fires ran down the middle, with benches on each side; and also of the *stofa*, the ladies' apartment, that was probably heated in the mode of the Lapland 'smoke-cabin.' The name *stofa* is the German *stube*, and the English stove. We have taken the name away from the room and applied it to the miniature representative, the heating apparatus, whereas in Germany and in the Norse countries the name is still applied to the chamber. In Iceland at the present day fuel is so scarce that the inhabitants of the house sit in the *stofa* with no other fire than the train-oil lamp flame; but the opening in the roof with its plug remains, not now to let smoke escape, but to let off the terrible stuffiness of the apartment when it becomes quite unendurable even to Icelandic lungs.

'THE HINT O' HAIRST.'

CHAPTER II.

JOHN GORDON was lying back in his complicated invalid chair, to which appliances of every kind were ingeniously fitted; he was smoking a very small cream-coloured cigarette; beside him, on one of the shelves attached to the chair, was a box of the same kind, aromatic, Russian, dainty in the extreme; and a tall tumbler of some sparkling stuff, neither more nor less than the light, very dry champagne which was chiefly instrumental in keeping him in life, was within comfortable reach of his hand.

Jeffreys was reading aloud from the columns of a pink paper; perhaps he did not read well, and Sir John may or may not have been interested; at anyrate, he lay back with his eyes closed, and the veins in his thin lids were very blue and distinct; he only opened his eyes when he felt the tumbler, and they came as a surprise in his pale saffron face, for they were a light, limpid sort of blue. His moustache was very even upon his thin, much-curved lip, and, like his hair, was nearly black; his nose, high and fine, a perfect aquiline, was too deli-

cately cut for a man's. His hands, one of his vanities, were too taper and pointed to be either honest or useful; the veins came clearly through their transparent olive pallor, and had that light blue colour that was in his eyes. Sir John's was a really remarkable face, having indeed a great deal of beauty, especially in the modelling of the features; but it was as strikingly unpleasant as it was strikingly handsome.

A face never to be trusted, from which no good might be hoped.

'Read that over again, Jeffreys! I didn't catch it; you've such a confounded habit of mumbling,' he said, in his thin, refined, strangely musical voice.

'His Sire was the great Galopin, and he has many of the qualities of this famous stayer; I heartily congratulate the Duke of — on his purchase; he should be a decided advantage to the Kingsclere stables, and I understand he is to be sent down at once,' the servant duly repeated; and a knock came to the door just as he concluded the passage.

'Now, who on earth is this?' murmured Sir John fretfully as the door opened, and not even raising his eyes to look.

'Mr William, sir,' said Jeffreys, and got out of his chair and waited with the paper in his hand.

'I must beg of you not to distress me with any trivial matters,' Sir John began as his brother came into the room. 'If you will chat peaceably, or have a hand at *écarté* or something of that kind; but otherwise—I have only just begun to recover from an attack from Rose, and I'm not prepared to endure a further edition.'

'If you mean an appeal to you on behalf of any one, you needn't alarm yourself,' said Willie dryly. 'I know your feelings on the subject so thoroughly'—

'Now this is what I simply cannot stand!' whined Sir John, turning his head to and fro on the cushions, as though in great nervous stress.

'Master was very upset before dinner, sir, and he'll have a worse night if he's not calmed down,' Jeffreys whispered rapidly.

'I have that letter of Thomson's in my pocket; you promised you would look into the matter. That's all I wanted to speak about,' said Willie, looking over, from his post by the mantel-piece, from the servant to his brother:

'Jeffreys, I will call you when I leave Sir John.'

Jeffreys vanished into another room.

'Well, I don't think I can bear any scolding,' said the baronet with a little laugh; 'and I am not in the humour for whining over the sufferings of perfectly healthy, sound-conditioned people whose chief enjoyment is the hating of their richer neighbours.'

'We may as well leave that alone in the meantime; we aren't very likely to agree upon it. Here is Thomson's letter.'

'Don't read it; I cannot stand their phraseology! What is his answer?'

'It cannot be done; the money belongs to me and to Rose at our mother's death, and neither you nor I can touch a farthing of it, with or without her consent.'

'I cannot believe that Thomson has come to such an insane conclusion!' Sir John broke out violently.

'Well, here it is in black and white. I told you that *you* could not possibly get the money, and it turns out that I am just as powerless; her ladyship cannot get it herself!'

'There is just this about it, then! You must go to Edinburgh and see Thomson yourself; I would have him here, but his last visit was a trial of the keenest nature. You must tell him the affair point by point. I should be glad if you put yourself out of the question also.'—Sir John's ready sneer came into play—and represent matters from my point of view; the money is certainly more yours than mine, but you can repay yourself out of the estate later. I cannot last more than a year; Herries said as much this morning; and though he no more understands me than that fool Hutchinson did, he isn't so far out this time!'

Willie frowned and moved his feet upon the rug.

'Then you wish me to go to Edinburgh?'—

'And explain the real urgency of the matter—nothing else. To-morrow?'

'If you give me a cheque, I suppose so; no, not to-morrow; next day.'

'Very well then; now—My God, what's that?'

The sudden cry brought Jeffreys on the scene at once.

'Something touched my hand!' Sir John went on, in high nervous alarm.

'It's Kate! She followed me into the room, I suppose,' Willie explained, with his eye upon the spaniel, whose icy nose thrust, with overweening confidence, into Sir John's moist, delicate hand, was the cause of excitement.

'Kick the brute out at once!' shouted Sir John, with an oath. 'How can you be so inconsiderate as to bring it when you know the state of my head?'

'Sorry you were startled,' Willie said quickly. 'I left her with Rose; but she always sneaks about at my heels. I will say good-night, as that business is settled; you can let me know if you have any other commissions.'

He left Sir John deep in his tumbler of champagne, and strolled out upon the lawn, filling his pipe and talking to Kate as he went.

A few minutes later he tapped on the drawing-room window.

Rose was sitting with her mother, and came at once to speak to him. He was leaning up against the stone sill, his thin black coat open, his hands in his pockets, and his fine face lit with an unconscious smile. He had asked her for her Scotch song-book, and she brought it him.

'What do you want it for?' she said, still holding it, and prepared to look up anything he named.

'Give it here a moment. I want to see the second verse of a song I know; I think it's in this.' And he strolled away with the book, and flung himself on the damp garden seat while he turned up the index. He came on it at once; the ardent Kate leaped up beside him and pushed her fat body close up to his arm; when he had turned up the page, he put an arm round her, and they appeared to read the verses together.

The smile on his face deepened and widened; he read slowly, taking in the sweetness of the lines, turning over the thought they brought him,

half saying the words with his lips, and then staring across the lawn to where the twilight stole slowly from among the dark masses of the yews that were ranged at the foot. The twilight had hidden there all day.

He was almost sure now that Aveline loved him; all the annoyances of his daily life seemed to fall off from him in the presence of that assurance. By-and-by his mother called to him to come in out of the damp; and he knocked his pipe out on the seat, pushed Kate down, and went into the house more refreshed and invigorated than if he had drunk from Sir John's big tumbler.

He was very bright and gay that evening, and even sang for them, a thing he could rarely be induced to do; he told his mother he was starting for Edinburgh in two days' time; and when she kissed him before going up to her room, she patted his big shoulder and said: 'My brave son,' in a voice that affected him very deeply.

He stood a long time at his window thinking: a sense of that friendliness a summer night has always had for lovers was present with him, and helped him to look boldly up to the stars' bright faces with his happiness all lettered in his eyes. He had suffered a great many hard, sore things, and he was going to forget it all in the love that was waiting for him! He had only to stretch out his hand for it, and, in his joy and triumph, he was very humble though very proud.

Kate rubbing against his knees awoke him from his dreaming, and she reminded him he had not spread the rug upon which she slept.

Next afternoon he left Rose packing his portmanteau and went off whistling to the banks of the Erne.

He found Aveline sitting in a patch of shade near where the water was quieter; he had known that he should find her.

She had been singing, reading, dreaming. Her choice of books was not great, and it included no novels or story-books whatsoever. She had *Aurora Leigh*; a Longfellow; and a volume or two of Greek philosophy, as personal friends. A little worn copy of the *Antigone* was often her handbook for a week at a time, and all these she knew and recurred to often and often. Where she did not fully grasp the meaning of the words, her fluent fancy skimmed above them in the swallow-flight that is so natural to a picturesque mind, and often superimposed a meaning all her own.

Best of all, she knew the ballads of her country; and the old, old love-songs that gave Burns his inspiration were familiar to her and often on her lips; music was unconscious with her; her clear, tender voice bent to the simple old airs like some silver birch sapling to the summer winds, and she could not have told you what she was singing.

The book beside her was sunk in the green of the mosses; she was looking over to the opposite bank, where a light wood-breath came through the tree trunks and bent the few late scabious blooms that still shone a soft pinkish-purple, though their season was past.

There's many things that come and gae,
Just kent, and just forgotten,
And the flowers that bask a bonnie brae,
Gin anither year, lie rotten!

It was a bit of that sad-sweet song, *It's Dowie in the hint o' Hairst*. She had sung it through, and she had just come to that verse when Willie Gordon appeared upon the path: ah, with Aveline it was all yet to be 'kent'; she was far, very far from understanding that the same flowers do not bloom next year! Flowers of the same kind, in the same places, yes; but, not the same flowers! These were not thoughts for her; a flower herself, who was so ready to bloom; whose dog-rose blushes flaunted flag-like in her cheeks as the twigs crashed for Willie's coming.

Kate bounded in advance and got her greeting, then came the look between the two pairs of eyes; no hand-shake, of course, at these informal meetings.

'You still come to your favourite haunt?' Willie said, when he had seated himself on the big, gray boulder whose scanty mosses he had flattened many times.

'Yes, I am so certain of being quite alone; no one ever comes here!'

'Except me!'

'And you don't always; the other night I was here and you appeared, and—you didn't—disturb me!'

'You were singing, and I'—

'Oh, I didn't mean that you ought to have come; I meant that even you do not disturb me always.'

'But you know that I like to come?' said Willie quietly, and searched her face with his frank eyes. 'I am going to Edinburgh to-morrow,' he added abruptly, as she made no response to his tentative advance.

'Yes? For very long?'

'I don't know how long; ten days perhaps.'

'Oh! Not longer?' in a voice whose relief was unmistakable.

'I cannot tell. If I had my own way, I would go away for months, years—and do something or other.'

'You do not like being here?' she asked, surprised at his face and emphasis.

'This sort of life is not full enough for me; I have nothing to do; a great, hulking fellow like me shouldn't eat his head off!'

Her eyes roved over him, his face, his shoulders, his whole figure, with a sort of new shyness thrown over her simplicity of manner; he was conscious of it, and yet he could not catch her eye.

'No; you could work very hard, I'm sure,' was all she said, and she paused long before she said it, having the unreadiness of a transparent soul at flinging some slight, appropriate phrase in front of the deeper thought she could not do other than conceal.

'If I were going out into the world to-morrow, as I wish to God I were going'—Willie began, very gravely—'I should ask you to wish me well, and to think of me sometimes; I should ask you, perhaps, to come *here* and think of me—think of me as if I were some one you loved and cared to watch over.'

Aveline dropped her clear eyes, and looked at the long flower-coloured hands lying idly between her knees; she could quite well hear each soft breath she drew; she could hear the needles dropping from the pines some yards away—even

above the river's waters.—He was looking at her all the time as he had never looked at her before; but she was too startled and surprised to know this.

In raising her head with a nervous gesture to break the strange spell that was falling on her, this glance clashed warmly with her own. Her cheeks defied the dogrose now.

'Would you do it, do you think?' he said at last. And she had no answer to give him at all.

'But I need not bother you to tell me,' he went on in a different tone. 'I am no more free to go out into the world and work than I am free to'—it seemed he hesitated for a moment or two, then, in a lower voice continued—'than I am free to ask you for your thoughts or your love—because I am not my own master, because I have no life of my own.'

Such a silence fell on them both as only the woodlands can compass, a silence full of long, soothing murmurs, a silence made up of thousands of live, nameless sounds.

A certain colour had flowed to the long hands that lay on her knees, and all Aveline's thought and sense seemed suspended, breathless in the face of a new sensation that was partly pleasure, but so much, oh, so much more pain.

But Willie spoke. 'Sing to me, will you?' he said suddenly, and some emotion made his voice unusual. 'Sing something.'

'It's dowie in the hint o' hairst,

At the wa'gang o' the swallow,

When the wind grows cauld and the burns grow bauld,

And the woods are hingin' yellow.'

'Not that one,' he said smiling, and laying for a second his hands on her knee. 'I love that one, but it's too sad; sing me the one about "Yarrow!"'

She turned her eyes to him full of a startled sort of terror. 'That's a sad one too,' she said. 'You know it goes: "She found him drowned in Yarrow." They are all sad, they— But I'm afraid I must be going home now.'

She got up, and he picked up her book for her.

'Really.' He stood up too; looking so big, so wondrous bonnie, that her heart misgave her more and more.

'Yes, I really must hurry.—Good-bye!' She held out her hand, and when he clasped it, a horrid sort of fear fell upon her: she was parting with him; this was the end of her chance of speaking to him or he to her, and there would be long to wait for another. A vivid light flamed into her face and fear—and something else gave her courage. 'And, Mr Gordon,' she began, hurriedly, while the red glowed to the curls that rayed out from her head, 'even though you are not going away for long years, I—I shall be thinking of you sometimes as I sit here! Do you think it matters?—I mean, I don't think it matters whether one is free or not free, one likes to be thought of kindly all the same; at least, I should.'

She was dreadfully frightened and ashamed as she stood there trying to be true to herself, but to him she seemed only divine.

'You would like to know you had some one's kind thoughts, even if'—

It seemed that either she gave them or he took her hands, then—

'Give me your kind thoughts, Aveline! Give me all that you can without my having to ask for it, because I may not ask as yet. I want a great deal!—And sing the little song about "Willie" sometimes, even though she did find him drowned in Yarrow; you know the one I mean? There is none that suits your voice so well.' He was smiling, but there was a triumph as well as an entreaty in his eyes.—'At least—I think so!'

Willie's fair and Willie's rare!
And Willie's wondrous bonnie,
And Willie's hecht to marry me,
Gin e'er he marries ony!

He sang the quaint old words to her in his rich Scottish voice, the voice that, when it is tender, is more tender than any other; and he would look at her, right into her eyes, and there was no place to hide her face, because her hands were tight in his, and so she had to hide it on his shoulder.

POEMS ON POEMS.

If it be true, as Mr Russell Lowell asserts, that a highly artificial condition of poetry precedes total extinction, the stream of British song must be fast drying up. The revival, by the school of Mr Swinburne, Mr Austin Dobson, Mr Andrew Lang, and Mr Edmund Gosse, of the 'Old French' forms of verse, is one of the most interesting phenomena in recent poetry. Landor said that the writing of epigrams was a degradation of the poet's office. The elder Disraeli classed the literary gymnastics of Villon and his imitators among the Follies of Literature. The Troubadours, the Trouvères, and the early Italians are, it is true, devotedly admired by those who look at them through the gold-rimmed spectacles of antiquarianism; but persons who are not smitten with the black-letter mania regard the ancient makers of ballades and villanelles as the concocters of an elaborate 'code of poetical jurisprudence, with titles and sub-titles applicable to every form of verse, and tyrannous over every mode of sentiment.'

The last clause contains the pith of the whole matter. Do complex verse-forms cramp the expression of poetic thought? If they do, can the use of them be defended? That they are very pretty when skilfully composed, no one will dispute. That the making of them is a charming pastime, no one who has ventured an experiment will deny. But are they fetters on poetic utterance? Perhaps the safest answer is, that some are, and some are not. The sonnet and the rondeau, for example, are capable of as much naturalness of expression as is the form in which Tennyson wrote *The Poet*. The triolet, on the other hand, although a very dainty plaything, is too frivolously artificial for serious use. But even the frailest and most rule-ridden of these forms—such as the triolet, the villanelle, and the kyrielle—may contain a very pretty love-poem or a dainty *jeu d'esprit*.

The employment and enjoyment of such verse-forms do not necessarily denote an insipid dilettantism. The fetters of one's own forging are not always irksome. There is a genuine pleasure in the solution of a self-set puzzle or the accomplishment of a self-imposed task. There

are those 'who feel the weight of too much liberty.' And these words remind us that Wordsworth has, in the sonnet of which they form part, made the best defence of that and kindred forms of verse. This, and the one beginning 'Scorn not the Sonnet,' are perhaps the very best of Poems on Poems. Both are so well known that we need not quote them. We print, instead, a sonnet of similar character, and a not unworthy echo of our greatest sonneteer. It is the work of an American writer, Mr R. W. Gilder, and was published in 1879, in a volume entitled *The Poet and his Master; and other Poems*:

What is a sonnet? 'Tis a pearly shell
That murmurs of the far-off murmuring sea;
A precious jewel carved most curiously;
It is a little picture painted well.
What is a sonnet? 'Tis the tear that fell
From a great poet's ardent ecstasy;
A two-edged sword, a star, a song—ah me!
Sometimes a heavy tolling funeral bell.
This was the flame that shook with Dante's breath;
The solemn organ whereon Milton played,
The coloured glass where Shakespeare's shadow falls:
A sea this is—beware who ventureth!
Fair like a fjord the narrow floor is laid,
Deep as mid ocean and sheer mountain walls.

Sonnets on the sonnet have been written by Dante, Keats, Rossetti, Joséphin Soulayr—whose performance elicited the warmest admiration of Sainte-Beuve—Schlegel, Lope de Vega, Ebenezer Elliott (the Corn-law Rhymers), William Sharp, Theodore Watts, Edith Thompson, Julia Dorr, J. C. Earle, and Anthony Morehead. The works of these writers are within the reach of most of those who feel curiosity enough to consult them. We will not, therefore, quote. But many readers may not have seen the following two burlesque sonnets, which deserve preservation. The first was written by Mr John Adams, the biographer of Camoens, and addressed to the late Archdeacon Cox:

You said last night that you had tried a sonnet,
Which 'cross the street you'd send to let me see.
Quite lost to guess what subject it may be,
I'm all anxiety that I should con it.
I hope no flea has got within your bonnet
To make you think that you can rival me.
You'll raise my ire, you may depend upon it;
The very thought calls up my chivalry.
Don't mind, however, what above I've wrote;
Its beauties all my wrath may soon assuage,
And if it's good, adieu to all my rage!
And I'll transfer to you the fame I've bought.
Of strictest rule I hope it bears the signs
Right measured verse, and only fourteen lines.

The other appeared in a Dublin magazine which has since ceased:

Well, if it must be so, it must; and I,
Albeit unskilful in the tuneful art,
Will make a sonnet; or at least I'll try
To make a sonnet, and perform my part.
But in a sonnet everybody knows
There must be always fourteen lines; my heart
Sinks at the thought; but, courage, here it goes.
There are seven lines already: could I get
Seven more, the task would be performed; and yet
It will be like a horse before a cart;
For somehow rhyme has got a wondrous start
Of reason, and while puzzling on I've let
The subject slip. What shall it be? But stay,
Here comes the fourteenth line. 'Tis done. Huzzah!

The rondeau, roundel, and ballade are, after the sonnet, the artificial verse-forms which have

been most successfully used in our language. English poets have, however, introduced several forms of 'spurious' measure; notably the Swinburnian. The length of the line in Mr Swinburne's 'roundel' makes it much easier to write than the 'genuine' poem. Indeed, it may be laid down as a general rule that the difficulty of these quaint poetical puzzles diminishes in proportion to the lengthening of their lines.

In illustration of the rondeau and its kindred, one need no more than refer to Mr Swinburne's splendid example beginning, 'A roundel is wrought as a ring or a starbright sphere.' Mr J. Cameron Grant has a 'genuine' roundel on the roundel in his *New Verse in Old Vesture*. By the way, Mr Grant is the only English writer who has ventured to compose a volume consisting entirely of 'Old French forms.' The earliest known rondeau on the rondeau is found in a volume entitled *Rondeaux*; translated from the black-letter French edition of 1527, by J. R. Best, Esq. It was published in 1838. This poem has very little artistic merit; but it is worthy of mention because it is probably the first of its kind in our language. We cannot refrain from quoting this very pretty rondeau by Mr Austin Dobson. It is paraphrased from a little gem by Voiture, and does not, we believe, appear in recent editions of Mr Dobson's poems:

You bid me try, BLUE EYES, to write
A Rondeau. What! forthwith?—to-night?
Reflect. Some skill I have, 'tis true;
But thirteen lines!—and rhymed on two!—
'Refrain,' as well! Ah, hapless plight!
Still, there are five lines—ranged aright.
These Gallic bonds, I feared, would affright
My easy Muse. They did, till you—
You bid me try!
That makes them eight.—The port's in sight;
'Tis all because your eyes are bright!
Now just a pair to end in 'oo.'—
When maids command, what can't we do!
Behold! The Rondeau—tasteful, light—
You bid me try.

Perhaps the best ballade on the ballade is the following, in which Mr Clinton Scolland very ingeniously refers to several of the 'Old French forms':

Of all the songs that dwell
Where softest speech doth flow,
Some love the sweet rondel,
And some the bright rondeau,
With rhymes that tripping go,
In mirthful measures clad;
But would I choose them?—No;
For me the blithe ballade!

O'er some, the villanelle
That sets the heart aglow,
Doth its enchanting spell,
With lines recurring, throw;
Some, weighed with wasteful woe,
Gay triolets make them glad;
But would I choose them?—No;
For me the blithe ballade!

On chant of stately swell
With measured feet and slow,
As grave as minster bell
At vesper tolling slow,
Do some their praise bestow;
Some on sestinas sad;
But would I choose them?—No;
For me the blithe ballade!

Prince, to these songs a-row
The Muse might endless add;

But would I choose them?—No;
For me the blithe ballade!

Mr Augustus M. Moore has written a humorous 'Ballade of Ballade-mongers'; and a witty poet, whose modesty publishes none but the initial letters of his name (G. H.), has printed a ballade entitled 'Malapropos,' in which he is cruel enough to say that 'Rondeau and ballade to the devil drive.'

Of the remaining and frailer forms of verse, the triolet is perhaps the most popular. With its short measure and its refrains, and only two true rhymes for eight lines, it is a most difficult verse to make. However, Mr W. E. Henley says it is easy 'if you really learn to make it:—'

Easy is the Triolet
If you really learn to make it!
Once a neat refrain you get,
Easy is the Triolet.
As you see!—I pay my debt
With another rhyme. Deuce take it!
Easy is the Triolet
If you really learn to make it.

Mr J. C. Grant, on the other hand, thinks the triolet too delicate for our English climate. So he writes:

Skip, little Triolet,
Back to your Race!
You are no violet—
Skip, little Triolet;
Vainly you say, 'Oh let
Me have a place!'
Skip, little Triolet,
Back to your Race!

About three years ago an American paper published a series of five amusing triolets. We venture to quote the second and third:

The Dictionary teaches me
The triolet receipt:
The verses of eight lines must be:
The Dictionary teaches me
The first line, by the recipe,
Three times I must repeat.
The Dictionary teaches me
The Triolet receipt.

The second line must reappear
To form the final line;
No matter if it soundeth queer,
The second line must reappear;
When poetry is far from clear
It is considered fine!
The second line must reappear
To form the final line.

The villanelle is another form very difficult to manage; but, says Mr Henley, 'it serves its purpose passing well.' Listen while he sings its praises:

A dainty thing's the Villanelle;
Shy, musical, a jewel in rhyme;
It serves its purpose passing well.
A double-clappered silver bell
That must be made to clink in chime:
A dainty thing's the Villanelle.

(These are the first six lines of Mr Henley's villanelle on the villanelle.) We do not know a kyrielle on the kyrielle in English; but there is a very dainty one in French by Theodore de Banville.

But why, one may ask, should the poet cramp his poetry by confining it within such an arbitrary form as that of the triolet or the villanelle?

Why not write a sonnet of fifteen lines, without rhyme, and in any convenient metre? Let us ask this question of two of the most skilful modern users of these forms—Mr E. W. Gosse and Mr Austin Dobson.

Why, Mr Gosse? 'Because,' he replies, 'the history of literature proves that law is better than anarchy, and the exact shape conceded by our ancestors to a form of verse is practically found, in spite of, or because of, its very difficulties, to be productive of a certain kind of art ('A Plea for some Exotic Forms of Verse'; *Cornhill Magazine*, July, 1877).

Mr Dobson thinks the revived verse-forms may add the new charms of buoyancy and lyric freshness to our amatory and familiar verse, which is already too much condemned to faded measures and outworn cadences. Taking a less artistic standpoint, he pleads for them as 'admirable vehicles for the expression of *jeux d'esprit*.' Thirdly, he recommends them to would-be poets, by stating that 'a course of rondeaux, triolets, and ballades' is an excellent training for those ambitious of poetic laurels. Mr Dobson well says that undoubtedly many who read sonnets in the days of Surrey and Wyatt scorned the mechanical form as a 'new-fangled Italian conceit'; but then, those readers could not foresee Milton's 'Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughter'd saints.' Therefore, we must not sneer at Mr Dobson when he pictures the Shakespeare of the future 'unlocking his heart' with a rondeau. And even if such quaint measures be but playthings, who, in these dull days, can have the heart to preach seriousness to the frolicsome poets at play?

THE COLONEL'S ROMANCE.

No one who saw Colonel Alured Turner stepping jauntily down St James's Street on a summer's morning could fail to observe that the little gentleman was on very good terms with himself. And indeed the Colonel had everything that makes life worth living. He was just fifty; his liver and his digestion were in good condition; he had a charming set of rooms in Piccadilly overlooking the Green Park; his soldier-servant was absolutely irreproachable; and last, but not least—without which all these advantages would have been as Dead Sea fruit—he possessed a grievance. Being in a double battalion regiment, it had taken the Colonel many years to climb to the top of the Captains, and when he at last drew near the head of the list, great changes were going on in the army, for a reformer had arisen who was about to sweep away the abuses of ages, and make the British army a thing for foreign soldiers to wonder at. And so it happened that in one short month Captain Turner found himself promoted to be Major, and then gazetted out of the service with the rank of Lieutenant-colonel. The Colonel was a smart officer, and loved his profession; but though he might have stayed five years longer with the regiment, he preferred to retire, because, as he declared, he would have had to pass all that time going in for some examination; 'for, by the Lord, sir, these miserable civilians are treating Her Majesty's officers as if they were a parcel of etceteraed schoolboys.'

And therefore it was with a feeling of peace towards all the world that Colonel Alured Turner entered his club, the Senior Gravel-grinders. Three days in the week the Colonel breakfasted at his club, and opened his letters whilst sipping his tea; on other days he breakfasted at home; and the incomparable Wilks marched down to the club to get his master's letters, and returned with all the airs of a field-marshal's orderly in mufti.

On this morning the Colonel on turning over his letters came upon an oblong pink envelope adorned with a gilt monogram, and addressed in a nervous feminine hand. As no presentiment warned him of the terrible consequences about to spring from that innocent-looking note, he smiled, for he recognised his sister-in-law's handwriting, and guessed that she was making some bewildered appeal to his knowledge of the world. He opened the pink envelope with the handle of a fork, as was his wont, and read an impassioned summons to call on the writer that afternoon (doubly underlined), as she was in great trouble (trebly underlined), and remained his very affectionate Selina Turner. The Colonel having with some difficulty read between the underlines, made a mental note of the engagement, and proceeded tranquilly with his breakfast and the rest of his correspondence.

About half-past four the Colonel, having enjoyed his after-luncheon cigar and doze, strolled, a rotund and trimly-groomed figure, towards his sister-in-law's house. He found his correspondent bathed in decorous and becoming tears, and she at once opened her heart to him. As usual, and as the Colonel expected, the subject-matter of her complaint was her only son and heir, who was always getting into scrapes, from which his uncle had to extricate him.

'Oh, Alured,' she exclaimed, as soon as she had ascertained that the servant had quite shut the door, 'I am in such distress! That wretched boy of mine!'

'Well, well, Selina,' said the Colonel, 'what has he done? Don't give way.'

'He's done nothing yet,' moaned the widow; 'it's what he's going to do.'

'Come, if he's done nothing, we have that in our favour at anyrate. There will be the less to undo.'

'Oh, but how dreadful it is! Only think, Alured, he's going to be married.'

'What!' said the Colonel, taking his gold-rimmed eyeglass out of his eye in magisterial fashion. 'The young dog! Why, he's not twenty-one yet!'

'No; and that makes it all the worse. Oh, I'm sure he's been caught by one of those designing actresses who are always on the lookout for very young men.'

'But he's got no title, Selina.'

'No; but he will have money, and a very good position for a commoner, and no doubt they know it.'

'And where is this precious scapegrace of yours?'

'At Bognor. He went there for a few days last month, and has stayed there ever since. I wondered what was the attraction, and now I know. It's very hard.'

'It is,' assented the Colonel ruefully, for he

saw that this meant a journey to Bognor for him, and the desertion of London at its best. 'And so he's going to be married?'

'So he says.'

'And who is she?'

'I don't know; except that he declares she is the most beautiful woman in the world, and that he loves her. I think she must be older than he is.'

'That, my dear Selina, goes without saying. Boys of twenty never have violent passions for a woman under thirty. She is older than he is, and cleverer. And where is the young rascal quartered?'

'Here is his letter, Alured. You had better take it. Heaven knows there is nothing private in it.'

'What a hurry the boy is in, to be sure!' went on Colonel Turner, pocketing the letter. 'Why, here am I already perilously near middle age, and I have not begun to think of marriage yet.'

'Ah, Alured,' said the widow, 'we all know your story, and how faithful you are to the memory of your first love.'

The Colonel blushed through the bronze that concealed the pink and white skin of his boyhood. 'Well, Selina,' he replied, 'how do you know that if your boy is disappointed of his first love, he may not do as I have done, remain a bachelor for her sake?'

The archness of the widow faded away into the anxiety of the mother. 'Only rescue him from this woman, and I will risk that.'

The Colonel had got his marching orders; so he rose to go, but with a heavy heart, for London in the season was the breath of life to him; while Bognor and a love-sick nephew in June were by no means to his liking.

He was a simple, straightforward soul, with a great affection for his late brother's widow and her only son, and never thought of hesitating or delaying when his services were needed on their behalf; but for all that, he felt very like a schoolboy whose holidays are drawing to a close. He told the incomparable Wilks while dressing for dinner that they must start for Bognor the first thing the following morning, and then resigned all responsibility. By the time his master returned from the club to bed, Wilks had made every preparation, had chosen the train and hotel, and arranged for the forwarding of all letters.

'Train starts at 11.35, sir. Breakfast here, or at the club, sir?'

'Here,' said the Colonel; 'and we may have to stay a week.'

'Very good, sir.'

And the Colonel retired to rest, leaving everything to his adjutant.

Personally conducted by Wilks, Colonel Turner arrived at the hotel selected for him in time for a late lunch, and then strolled out along the Chichester road to concoct a method of approaching the enemy, while Wilks went out to reconnoitre.

During the last few years the Colonel had extricated his nephew from several boyish scrapes, and had in a general way acted as a second father to him; but this escapade was beyond everything. Look at it how he would, he could see no line

of action that would enable him to take the initiative. He might rush in and forbid the banns; but he was conscious that in so doing he would inevitably look like a fool, and the great aim and object of his later life was to avoid any such appearance of imbecility. The only result of his cogitations was a first-rate appetite; so he returned to his hotel hungry, but still undecided how to act.

After dinner he established himself on a deck-chair in the veranda, and, reverently lighting a Trichinopoly, abolished all thoughts of his nephew, and gave himself up to a lazy contemplation of the effect of the moonlight on the sea. But he was little more than half-way through his first cigar when Wilks marched up, saluted, and came to attention. The Colonel was a little short of breath, especially after dinner, so he merely nodded his head and said: 'Well?'

'Mr Charles is in the town, sir.'

'Ha!' ejaculated the Colonel.

He had said nothing to Wilks about the object of his visit; but it was one of the chief excellences of that incomparable servant that he always managed to hit upon the right sort of information.

'Mr Charles is at the *Porpoise*, sir.'

'Anybody with him?'

'No, sir.'

'Didn't see you, did he?'

'No, sir.'

'Don't let him.'

'Very good, sir.'

The Colonel paused to think over the news. His Trichinopoly was three-quarters gone; so he hurled the stump into the darkness and watched it turn over and over on the gravel, emitting a shower of sparks like a squib. Then he carefully lit another cigar, and, with a deep sigh—for he loved his ease—said: 'Call me at eight to-morrow, Wilks.—Good-night.'

'Good-night, sir.'

Wilks saluted and disappeared in the darkness, his measured step resounding on the gravel like the footfall of a whole company in the silence of the evening.

The next morning Colonel Turner put his poor little plan into action. He was at his wits' end, and could think of nothing better than catching his nephew early in the day and trusting to chance to bring about a crisis. Soon after breakfast, therefore, he appeared on the parade with his patent leather boots and gold-rimmed eye-glass flashing in the morning sun, and took up his position on a seat which commanded, but not too ostentatiously, the main entrance to the *Porpoise*. He had not long to wait. He soon became aware that his nephew was in the hall of the *Porpoise*, giving orders to the porter; and so he rose and strolled gently towards the pier, rightly judging that Charles would not turn to the left and go towards the outskirts of the town, at any rate so early in the day. In a few moments the Colonel turned short round and retraced his steps, and then uncle and nephew met face to face.

'Hullo, uncle!'

'Hullo, Charles! What are you doing down here?'

'Oh, I'm—— Well, I'm staying here, don't you know?'

'I see. Like me, I suppose; taking a whiff of sea-air in the middle of the season. And yet I haven't seen much of you in town, have I?'

The little Colonel was planted fair and square upon his shiny little boots, and looked straight up at his tall nephew, who was shifting uneasily from one leg to the other; for he was as yet young and unskilled to conceal his thoughts in words.

'Why—er—no—not much,' he stammered. 'The fact is—come and have a drink,' he blurted out with the sudden satisfaction of one inspired.

The Colonel was a moderate man, and was doubtful of the quality of the liquor at the *Porpoise*; but he knew that wine warms the heart of boy even more than of man, and he was anxious to obtain his nephew's confidence. The result was exactly what the Colonel expected. They had not returned to the parade long, before Charles, after nervously touching on indifferent subjects, suddenly turned on his uncle with the story of his first serious passion.

'Uncle, I want to get married.'

'Want to get what?' said the Colonel, slightly taken aback at the suddenness with which this piece of information was jerked at him.

'I want to get married,' repeated Charles, getting quite piteous in his excitement. 'Oh, Uncle Alured, I love her so; and I think she likes me, and won't you help me?'

The Colonel consulted the lighted end of his Trichinopoly, as was his custom. 'Where is she playing?' said he, after a pause.

'Playing? She doesn't play.'

'Resting here, I suppose,' went on the Colonel, who was a patron of the drama, and knew something of its vernacular.

'I don't know what you mean, uncle; she's a lady.'

'They all are,' murmured the Colonel confidentially to a distant fishing-smack.

'She's a little older than I am,' went on Charles stiffly.

'Of course,' said the Colonel to the smack.

Charles flushed to the roots of his fair hair. 'This is not a subject for chaff,' he said indignantly; 'when a fellow's awfully in love he's—well, he's awfully gone, you know.'

'My dear boy,' said the philosophic uncle, laying his hand upon his nephew's shoulder, 'take my advice; have as many love affairs as you like, but don't think of marrying before you are thirty.'

'Ah, that is all very fine for you,' replied Charles, somewhat mollified; 'but I've nearly ten beastly years to wait till then.'

'Ten very excellent years,' said the Colonel sentimentally; 'mind you do not waste them.'

For a short time there was silence and a feeling of constraint between the two, and then Charles said suddenly, in a tone of suppressed emotion: 'Uncle Alured, there she is. I want you to know her, and she has often asked me to introduce you. Come along.'

The Colonel looked, and saw a tall trim-waisted figure coming along the parade with a light springy step. He felt that the crisis had arrived, so he threw away his Trichinopoly and braced himself for the fray. As his nephew's first love swept gracefully towards them, the

Colonel saw that she was by no means so youthful as the trimness of her figure might imply.

Charles introduced his uncle to his love with an air of proprietorship which could not but have been gratifying to both of them, and the Colonel raised his hat with his most gallant air. But the lady was far from content with so formal a recognition, for she held out both her hands, and said: 'Colonel Turner—Alured—don't you remember me?'

'Georgina!' ejaculated the Colonel, so taken aback that for the only time on record he dropped his gold-rimmed eye-glass.

'Yes, Georgina—or Mrs Marshall,' replied she, smiling at the Colonel's astonishment. 'Did you not expect to see me?'

'Indeed, no,' gasped Colonel Turner; 'most unexpected pleasure.'

'Why, you wicked boy,' said she, turning to Charles, 'didn't you tell me that your uncle had been on the point of coming down ever so many times, and was only prevented by his engagements in London?'

It was now Charles's turn to look foolish, and he did so in the completest fashion, mumbling something about the Colonel's being such a popular man—London season—every one wanted to see him.

Mrs Marshall cut him short. 'I'm very angry with you,' said she, though she did not look it.

Charles fell in by her side with a very sulky expression of countenance, and the three walked on together. It was wonderful what a number of reminiscences Mrs Marshall and the Colonel had in common. They talked about persons of whom Charles had never heard, and of things that happened before he was born, and irritated him extremely by taking it as a matter of course that the beginning of all things worth mentioning did not coincide with his appearance in this world. At last his temper got the better of him. He halted, raised his hat stiffly, and held out his hand to say 'Good-bye'; but the dignity of his attitude was rather spoiled by the fact that neither of his companions noticed his intention, so that he had to follow them hat in hand.

The Colonel at once saw how matters stood, and promptly took advantage of the position. He apologised for absorbing so much of Mrs Marshall's valuable time, told her how charmed he was to meet her again, and trusted that he might have permission to call upon her. In spite of Mrs Marshall's protestations, the little Colonel departed, polite and smiling, promising to call on the following day, and leaving Charles, sulky and scowling and ill-used, to continue the promenade with what grace he might.

Colonel Turner was as good as his word. He called on Mrs Marshall the next day, and on several following days, until at last Charles wrathfully discovered that youth was being distanced by middle age, and that he was being routed on his own ground by the uncle whose airs and graces he despised. He relapsed into a sulky and moody humour by way of ingratiating himself with his lady-love, and became so bearish that his changed state was the talk of the barmaids at the *Porpoise*.

One evening when he called on Mrs Marshall, after having been unable to see her all day, he was told that she was at home, but engaged. He

had frequently been told of late that she was not at home, but never that she was engaged, and the fact that his presence was by implication unwelcome, made him all the more determined to see his faithless love.

The pretty maid seemed very unwilling to admit him, but under the influence of five shillings she decided to risk it and to show him up-stairs. As he expected, he found Mrs Marshall and his uncle quite content with their own company. He accepted their greetings very stiffly, and refused to be seated, for tragedy and a low soft-cushioned armchair are incongruous things. So he remained standing, and steadfastly ignored his uncle.

'You did not expect me this evening?' he began.

'No, Charles,' said the widow. 'You never told me you were coming in; but you are always welcome.'

'I was,' returned Charles, 'until, until a week ago; but now'—His voice failed him, and he paused.

'But now, Charles? You are just as welcome as ever you were, and always will be.'

He shook his head sadly. 'Not as ever I was. Things have changed, and you with them.'

'I do not understand you, Charles.'

'I am afraid you will not; but there must be an understanding between us.'

'Please explain yourself.'

'I will,' replied Charles, rejoicing in his own eloquence, and beginning to enjoy his sufferings, for at twenty it is occasionally pleasurable anguish to place one's finer feelings on the rack, especially before an audience that takes matters seriously and does not jeer at the martyrdom. 'A few weeks ago I was always with you. You were always glad to see me, and never said you were not at home.'

'Very true.'

'And now?'

'Am I any less glad to see you?'

'Am I with you as often as I was? Do I see you as often as I did?'

'I really don't know,' said the widow, looking with a puzzled air at her vehement admirer; 'but if you do not, whose fault is it but your own?'

'My fault?' cried Charles, with a sardonic smile, in which he endeavoured to blend sarcasm, lofty pity, and blighted hopes—'my fault? It is yours, Madam, and his,' turning suddenly on his uncle, who had been sitting all through the interview on the extreme edge of his chair.

Colonel Turner was horribly annoyed at his nephew's proceedings. He detested a scene, and was disgusted to find such a lamentable want of good taste in his brother's son. He wriggled a little nearer the edge of his chair, screwed his eye-glass more firmly into his eye, and began: 'Really, Charles'—

'Ah!' said Charles, luxuriating in the full enjoyment of his wrongs, and piecing together metaphors from many novels he had been reading on the beach of late, 'this is the elderly destroyer of my happiness, the snake in my bower who has cankered my rose.'

'For Heaven's sake, Charles.'

'Till he came,' went on the lover, unheeding, 'I was all in all to you. I loved you as man never loved woman before, and you knew it!'

'Charles,' said the widow, who was beginning to get angry, for she thought the young man had been drinking, 'will you kindly leave off this nonsense, and behave like a rational being? I think we had better defer further conversation until you have got over your present state.' And she turned her back on him in the most stately fashion.

Charles rushed forward, and almost threw himself on the ground at her feet. 'Mrs Marshall! Georgina! You know—you must have seen that I love you, and that I hoped to make you my wife!'

'My dear boy,' said the widow, so taken aback that she hardly knew what to say, 'you surely never thought anything so foolish.—Why, Charles,'—and she could not help smiling, spite of the earnest pleading of his face—'surely you can never have thought in that way of me, a woman old enough to be your'—here she glanced towards the Colonel, and slipped her hand into his—'to be your aunt.'

Charles glared wildly at the pair, and then with all the tragedy oozing out of him, rushed incontinently from the room.

Three days later, the Colonel again entered his sister-in-law's drawing-room, and was received with effusion.

'Oh, Alured!' cried she, 'how can I thank you? I know you have routed this woman, for Charles appeared here in a furious state last Tuesday, and has now gone yachting with a man he hates.—How did you manage it?'

'There was but one way, Selina.'

'And that was——?'

'To marry her myself.'

'Oh, Alured!' cried the mother, sinking into a chair, 'what a sacrifice! And for me! How can I repay you?'

The Colonel smiled, perhaps a little sadly. 'Surely I am in debt to you.'

'And you who were so faithful to your first love! Oh, Alured, could not you get off?'

'Selina,' said the Colonel, 'do not distress yourself on my account. The lady I am going to marry is my first and only love!'

SHADOWS.

SHADOWS come and shadows go—

All the world is full of shadows;

Many hardly deem them so,

And pursue them, two and two,

In the spring-time, through the meadows.

Love is not the only aim

All mankind are seen pursuing—

Pleasure, fortune, glory, fame;

Failing these, the quest renewing

After shadows, just the same.

Shadows come and shadows go;

Sorrow does not stay for ever;

Time rolls on with ceaseless flow,

Pleasures pass; but so does woe;

Go thy way, complaining never.

JAMES ROOK.

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THE JEWS IN PALESTINE.

So much has been heard of late about schemes for the formation of Jewish colonies in the Western Hemisphere, that it will be of interest to show something of the actual position of the Jews in the land of their fathers. It must be said at the outset, however, that the popular idea of the steady set of a Jewish stream towards Palestine is very much of an exaggeration. During the last ten years there have certainly been considerable arrivals of bodies of Jews in Palestine, but there have also been considerable departures. The stream of emigration is a fluctuating one, and is affected by a number of causes; but it has never been so large as is commonly supposed.

Thus, we have seen it stated, with an appearance of assurance calculated to mislead, that the Jewish population of Palestine is now about 150,000. This estimate seems to be about three times too high—to judge from an informal census made a year ago by the American consul at Jerusalem. From this enumeration it appears the Jews are to be found only in nine of the towns, and in these numbers—namely, Jerusalem, 25,322; Jaffa, 2700; Tabreeyeh, 2900; Safed, 6126; Hebron, 1200; Haifa, 1640; Acre, 200; Ramleh, 166; Nablus, 99. Total in towns, 40,353. Add eleven agricultural colonies containing 435 families, 2175. Total Jews in Palestine at end of 1891, 42,528.

With regard to the agricultural colonies, we have reckoned five persons to the family, as customary in England and America; but these Jewish families do not average five, and the probability is that the Jewish population of Palestine does not exceed 42,000—a total which is very far indeed from a re-occupation of the Promised Land.

How, then, has the idea become so general that the children of Israel are crowding back to occupy Palestine, and have already peopled about one-half of the country? A little gleam of explanation is afforded by Consul Merrill in a note which he appends to his Census Report: 'I was greatly

puzzled by the reports which reached Jerusalem every fortnight, if not every week, of the surprisingly large number of Jews that were landed at Jaffa. At last I discovered that the boatmen were in the habit of counting every individual as a "family," so that if thirty Jews arrived in a given steamer, it was announced that "thirty families" had arrived; if fifty souls came, "fifty families" had come; and so on. If the Jews did not originate this vicious method of counting, I feel certain that they encouraged it. As an illustration, they are in the habit of speaking of a cluster of houses, say of four, six, or ten, as the case may be, which join each other, as Jewish houses always do, containing one and possibly two rooms each, as a "colony." If you ask a Jew to state the number of Jewish colonies around Jerusalem, he will give you almost fabulous figures, because of his strange method of reckoning.'

This little explanation certainly throws a great deal of light on what has been very dark and puzzling for those who have attempted to follow the Hebraic movement in the East. But we are enabled to throw a little more light still.

In the first place, then, the main cause of the reported increase of Jewish emigration to Palestine during the last three years has been a 'land-boom' in Jerusalem. And in the second place, the cause of the 'land-boom' has not been a sudden bubbling up of zeal for the 'redemption of Israel,' but the prospects of a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, built by Christian capital through a Gentile-governed land. That railway is now completed between the sea-board and the ancient city, the first locomotive having entered Jerusalem on September 13, 1892. It will undoubtedly be a convenience for pilgrims and tourists, however much of an anachronism it may seem, but whether it will ever pay on the existing traffic, or whether it will create new traffic, are matters of considerable doubt.

The first appearance of the engineers on the line of route was the signal for the beginning of such a speculation in Jerusalem as one would look for rather in a Western American

than in an Oriental town. The idea was fostered that the railway would make Jerusalem once more a mighty city and a great centre of population; and this idea at once suggested another, that there would be a great demand for building-ground. Thereupon ensued one of the wildest of 'land-booms,' during which plots of ground changed hands with rapidity, and at constantly increasing prices, until thousands were paid for what hundreds would have readily bought a few years ago. There was no actual demand for the land, it must be observed, but only the hope and expectation of a rush with the railway.

It was to take part in this 'land-boom'—to make hay while the sun of speculation was shining—that many Jews hurried to Jerusalem. About the same time many schemes were being discussed for re-stocking the land with Jewish colonists, and it was a not unnatural desire to be first in the field. If 'the redemption of Israel' was at hand, why should not some of the Children of Israel have a profit out of the transaction?

But it was not to be, inasmuch as the dream of Jewish reoccupation altogether left out of account the fact of Turkish possession. It was absurd to suppose that Turkey would give up the country without money and without price; and it was short-sighted to ignore the right of Turkey to lay down conditions of immigration. When last summer the Imperial firman was issued forbidding the entry into Palestine of any more Russian Jews, a panic set in, and the price of land in and around Jerusalem at once fell about one-third. The Jews who had come with money in their pockets, not to occupy and cultivate the land, but to engage in buying and selling it while the boom lasted, thereupon packed up and departed. Others who went to spy out the land with a view to investment and permanent settlement, also departed on realising how poor were the prospects. These, again, have opened the eyes of the native (Palestine) Jews to the possibilities of life in other countries, especially America, and have stirred up a new emigration. And finally, the government not only forbade the entry of any more Russian Jews, but actually compelled some two hundred families who had entered without visible means of support to leave the country. The country is impoverished enough without the addition of pauper immigrants. There are no mines and no manufactures, the soil is poor, and the Jew is better adapted to trade than to agriculture.

In Palestine the Jews have always most favoured the four cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tabreyeh, and Safed, and until within the last few years not a Jew could be found residing outside their walls. Even now more than half the Jews in Palestine belong to Jerusalem. They are essentially dwellers in cities, not dwellers in tents, with much talent for traffic, but little for tillage.

This is not to say that some measure of success has not attended the efforts of late years to establish *bona fide* Jewish colonies in Palestine. Notable among these is the colony of Haifa, associated with the name of the late Laurence Oliphant, where a Jewish population of some sixteen hundred is said to be fairly prosperous. This, however, is on the coast, where are oppor-

tunities of gain not presented to inland settlements.

The entire population of the 'colonies,' as distinguished from the cities of Palestine, is estimated at rather less than 2200, and more than one-half of these are actually supported by the Rothschilds. That is to say, in the Rothschilds' colonies an allowance of about sixteen shillings a month is made for each individual, so that a family of five enjoys a joint monthly income of four pounds, in addition to a free house, free schooling, free medical attendance, and free water. The Rothschilds pay for all these things for the colonists, as well as all the needful expenses of the synagogue, the object being to support those who are willing to become farmers while they are learning the business. The object is admirable; but the method is open to this objection, that it removes the spur of personal necessity. No community can attain to thriving prosperity under such conditions.

One reason why so many Jews centre in Jerusalem is that to the Sacred City money is sent by the devout and charitable from all parts of the world. It is a sort of central depot of philanthropy, and in consequence not a family nor an individual there need be in want. The *haluka*, or portion, allowed to each family is paid almost as regularly as a dividend, and if it be not enough in itself for comfortable subsistence, it is enough to remove the necessity for industrious work. The Jews in high places are well aware of the demoralising effect on the Jews of Jerusalem of this misapplied philanthropy, and of the attraction it forms for the 'thrifless and shiftless.'

A successful example of colonisation is that of some Germans who have established what is known as the Temple Colony, near Jerusalem. This is said to be one of the most attractive places in Palestine, and it is noteworthy that it has not been established by Hebrews, but mainly by a Lutheran pastor named Hoffmann. They call themselves Temple Christians. Most of the families composing the colony, indeed, were very poor to begin with, and they received no pecuniary help from outside. They had to build houses for themselves, break up ground for cultivation, lay out their gardens, and plant trees. In short, they had to work hard; and this colony is said to be now as flourishing as most of the Jewish colonies are disappointing and discouraging. There are also settlements at Haifa, Jaffa, and Saron.

The success of the German colonies, however, and of Laurence Oliphant's efforts, would seem to show that the failure of agricultural colonies in Palestine is not so much the result of soil and climate as of the peculiar character of the Jewish people.

With regard to this, the testimony of Consul Merrill may be added. He says: 'I have myself inquired of hundreds of well-to-do Jews in Europe and America if there was any general desire on their part, or on the part of Jews with whom they were acquainted, to remove to Palestine; and I have found that such a feeling exists only to a very limited extent, and that it is confined almost wholly to the poorer classes. As a rule, most Jews in the Western world are so well satisfied with their present condition of prosperity that they would not on any account leave their homes for the hardships and uncertainties of a colonising life in the land that once belonged to

their very remote ancestors. Their mission in the world does not appear to be that of colonisation.*

The experience of Baron Hirsch's colony in Argentina leads to the same conclusion—neither in the West nor in the East do the Jews seem to take with liking to agriculture.

It is estimated on the most recent data that there are altogether about seven, or at most eight millions of Jews in the world. According to the computation we have given—and it is based on the statistics of the secretaries of the various Jewish organisations, on the returns of schools, hospitals, &c., and on the records of the various foreign consuls—only about forty-two thousand of these are settled with any appearance of permanence in Palestine. Thus, only about one-half of one per cent. of the chosen people have yet found a home, and that a poor one, in the land of their fathers.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER IX.—WHAT CAME OF A LECTURE AT THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL.

A WEEK later, all the Suffield family, except George, were established at Rutland Gate. They had hurried up to London to attend Uncle Harry's meeting with the Royal Geographical Society. That took place in the rooms of the Society on the evening of the day they arrived, and all three were present, agog to listen to their relative's account of his latest travels, and Miss Raynor was also among them; she had been in London attending to her school duties for two or three days already.

'George would have enjoyed this,' said Suffield, looking round upon the more or less distinguished company of ladies and gentlemen. 'It's a pity he couldn't be spared from the works for a day; but he couldn't, you know, at the present time. I say, he couldn't be spared,' he repeated, half-aside to Isabel.

'No, uncle,' said Isabel, feeling compelled to say something to that direct appeal, 'I suppose he couldn't.'

'If Mr Ainsworth is in London,' said Mrs Suffield, giving a glance at her niece, 'he might have come to-night.'

'Has he come to London yet?' asked Isabel, without attempting to conceal her interest.

'No,' answered Suffield; 'not yet. He wrote to me a day or two ago that he would not be up for a week or so.—But here's your uncle going to begin.'

Since this is not a geographical treatise, nor a record of the proceedings in Old Burlington Street, but only a story concerning a few people in whom we are deeply interested, mention is made here of Mr Raynor's address to the Royal Geographical Society only because of one particular and, it may seem, obscure result of its delivery. It marked an auspicious change in the relations between Isabel and her uncle, and by that token it was the determining point of her history. I must not, however, be supposed to mean that Isabel was in any wise more conscious

that she had taken a new departure than is the moorland rill when its course is deflected by a stone, and it thenceforth flows in another direction than that in which it had set out; I merely use the historian's privilege of laying the finger on some small fact which might be impatiently skipped as of no consequence, and saying: 'Note this: it is a point (or an angle) of event or opportunity.'

Isabel listened to her uncle's adventures in the Shan States with unwavering attention. Everything he said was of supreme interest to her, first because she was of the rare kind of young lady that, with a romantic imagination, has an omnivorous appetite for facts, and second, because her uncle had been, like Caesar, 'a great part' of all he related. Moreover, she had a tolerably clear idea of the whereabouts of the Shan States and of their characteristic features, which, it may be cheerfully granted, most of the guests of the Royal Geographers had not. Was it not natural, therefore, that Mr Raynor, casting his shrewd eye round as his discourse progressed, and remarking the politely-veiled looseness of attention and dullness of understanding of rows of well-dressed people, and even the wandering gaze and the ill-suppressed yawn of those of his own household, should fix his eye with satisfaction and pleasure on the intelligent and unweariedly attentive face of his brother's daughter? The wall of dislike and suspicion which he had built between his niece and himself had already begun to crumble under various influences. The grievance against his brother, which he had nursed and kept warm in his foreign solitude, had been discouraged and refused attention by his kindly brother-in-law, and he had asked himself—on Suffield's suggestion—'Was it, after all, fair that the girl should be held in cold disgrace because of the wrong done by her parents?' Moreover, he was fain to confess to himself, after his few days' close observation of Isabel in Lancashire, that he had been mistaken in thinking her pragmatical, conceited, and ambitious; and since he had come to London he had recalled in the loneliness of his hotel the unconscious, pathetic, gentle inquiry he had now and again seen in her eye—'What have I done that my father's brother should treat me so coldly?'—and he had felt ashamed of himself. Now, on this Royal Geographical evening, Isabel finally conquered, and won her uncle's regard much as Desdemona won Othello's love, by her simple, engrossed attention to his tale of adventure, peril, and discovery. And just in such degree as Uncle Harry had been crabbed, reserved, and suspicious hitherto, he became open, generous, and trusting.

All five rode to Rutland Gate together from Old Burlington Street in the roomy Suffield carriage, and Uncle Harry chaffed his sister and his brother-in-law in remote terms for their inattention to his discourse. He suggested that, being now established in an Earl's house, they felt justified in being supercilious; that they had eaten a dinner of aristocratic length and *bourgeois* substance; that the air of the lecture-room had been soporific, and the dresses of the ladies distracting; and so forth.

'Well, you see, Harry,' said Suffield, 'you struck a note above my understanding rather. I don't know much about geography; and for all

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I know, your Shan States may be next door to Timbuctoo.'

'Ah, but, George,' said Harry, 'you'd have wanted to know where they were and all about them, if you had heard that they grew cotton or wanted calico.'

'I should that, lad,' answered Suffield; 'I should, I confess.'

'You see, Harry,' said Mrs Suffield, 'George and I are both getting too old to care for knowledge for its own sake.'

'That's just it,' said Suffield. 'But here's a young lady'—leaning forward and laying his hand on Isabel's—'that's a regular cormorant for knowledge. Now, *she* listened to you. Didn't you see it? You should be satisfied, I think, if nobody else had heard a word you said.'

'I saw it,' answered Uncle Harry promptly and warmly, but with a touch of shyness, 'and I was more than satisfied; I was flattered.'

'Oh, Uncle Harry!' exclaimed Isabel; she was too surprised and delighted to say more than.

'I believe,' said Aunt Joanna, 'if Uncle Harry were the Royal Geographical Society, he would give you a gold medal, Isabel, for your attention.'

'I would, certainly,' asseverated Uncle Harry.

'I have had some school prizes in my time,' laughed Isabel, 'and I suppose I worked for them; but a gold medal would be the most remarkable and the least deserved of them all. I listened to uncle's lecture because I was interested.'

'You are fond of travel, are you?' asked her uncle.

'I don't know,' she answered, 'because I never have travelled. But I am fond of books of travel'—

'What books are you *not* fond of, Bell?' asked Euphemia from her corner.

'—and I have to teach geography, you know,' continued Isabel.

'Ah, of course, she has!' said Suffield. 'So it's not so much a case of knowledge for its own sake, after all.'

'But I don't suppose, Uncle George,' said she, 'I shall ever be able to use all I've learned about the Shan States from Uncle Harry—though there was one thing I didn't quite understand.'

'And what was that, my dear?' asked Uncle Harry, all agog to explain.

Talking thus, they reached Rutland Gate, and sat down to a morsel of supper; and still Isabel and her uncle—her new-found uncle, it seemed to her—talked; and then they all went to bed very tired, but very happy—none better pleased at the turn things had taken than the excellent Suffield.

Next morning, Isabel had to be off betimes to attend to her duties at the Ladies' College. When she returned weary to her lodgings in the Marylebone Road late in the afternoon, she had an agreeable surprise. On the mantel-piece of her little sitting-room there awaited her a letter. She did not recognise the handwriting on the envelope, but on opening it she found a bank-note for twenty pounds and a note from her Uncle Harry.

'My dear niece,' he wrote, 'I am sending you your gold medal in a handy transmutable form.

You can buy a frock or something with it. I should like to come and drink a cup of tea and have a long talk with you, if I may, to-morrow afternoon.—Your loving uncle, HARRY RAYNOR.'

Isabel sat down for an instant to endure the happiness that filled her. She was of those bright, well-constituted souls that delight to believe all people—especially their kindred and those they must associate with—are more or less good. It had pained her to have to think hardly and grudgingly of her uncle, and now that she could think well of him, she rejoiced all the more because she had formerly thought ill. She did not lay the change in his behaviour to the account of any merit of her own; she did not even stay to remark that he had changed: she only took blame to herself that she had until now mistaken him.

'How good, how kind of him!' she said to herself, glancing again at his note; and she was not thinking of the money he had sent—part of which she had already mentally set aside for her father—but of the disposition that had prompted the gift and the accompanying affectionate expressions.

She at once drew up to the table and wrote a little letter of thanks and of invitation: she would expect, she said, to see her uncle at five o'clock the following afternoon.

And at five o'clock the following afternoon he came. He pressed her hand affectionately, and then he fidgeted about her little sitting-room for some time, peeping into the books on her side-table, reading the backs of the volumes in her bookcase, and looking at the prints on the walls.

'Pretty comfortable, eh?' he asked.

'It suits me very well, uncle,' she answered. 'As well, that is,' she continued with a laugh, 'as my landlady will permit. The tear of reproach is constantly trembling in her eye: she thinks it so improper, poor dear soul, in a young lady—not a young woman: she makes the distinction—to live alone! I have literally had to wring a latchkey out of her. And whenever I come home late, I find her sitting up for me; and she says "Good-night" with such a sigh of relief, that I am tempted to pass up-stairs whistling and bang my door like a man. Poor woman! I am on her conscience, I know; and she tries to get me to believe that I am always trembling on the verge of disgrace or ruin. But it's handy here for the college, and it's cheap.'

'Hum; yes,' murmured her uncle. Then suddenly turning to her and taking her hand he said: 'My dear, I have an apology to make. Down at your Uncle Suffield's place you no doubt thought me very cold and distant to you.'—Isabel blushed and said nothing, though she looked him frankly in the face: she could not deny that she had thought something of the kind. '—Of course you did,' he went on; 'and I was, I know. I haven't much excuse, but such as it is, I give it. You reminded me very much of a woman—a girl—that once—years ago—treated me badly—at least, worse than I deserved. That's all. The impression has worn off: I see you are not like her in the least. So let us be friends, and say no more about it; and again he warmly pressed her hand.

Isabel returned his pressure, saying: 'I am not sorry you have told me that, uncle; though

I am sorry you have told it me as an apology. Every one has a right to form an opinion of another.'

'Even a wrong one?' queried her uncle.

'Even a wrong one, surely, uncle,' said she—'if it be formed on what appear sufficient grounds.'

'Ah, that's just it,' said her uncle.

She made no other allusion to that past of his of which his words had given her a hint; but henceforward it invested him in her eyes with a new sentimental interest, in which the strongest-minded woman likes to indulge.

And then they sat down to tea and became very friendly. They talked freely and almost without pause of many things, Isabel perceiving that she pleased her uncle both with her opinions and her expression of them, and resuming, therefore, more and more of her bright, fresh self. As they thus talked, he suddenly posed her with a question: 'What would you do if you had a great deal of money?'

'What would you call "a great deal"?' she asked, thinking of her salary, the twenty pounds she had just received, and her father.

'Well, not so much as your Uncle George has tied up in his mills,' answered he, 'but enough, say, to bring a yearly income of about three thousand pounds.—Would you call that "a great deal," or not?'

'I would,' said Isabel, with her eye not really on herself, but on her uncle. 'And if I had so much, the first thing I should do, I believe, would be to make myself very comfortable, especially if my life hitherto had been rather hard, and busy, and bare. If I had a taste for books, I should buy books—beautiful books, and rare books; and if I had a taste for pictures, I should surround myself with fine pictures—not very expensive pictures, necessarily, by famous artists, but pictures that pleased me whether they were by popular painters or no; and so on with furniture, and china, and carpets, and beautiful things of all kinds. And then if I liked good dinners, I should have them.'

'Dinners, too!' laughed her uncle. 'My dear, you will permit me to say that your tastes appear masculine.'

'Well,' she answered, 'is it not of a man I am thinking?'

'I see,' he cried. 'You are thinking of me! But I wished you to think of yourself: I want to know what you would do with so much money.'

'Truly, uncle,' she answered after a moment's consideration, 'if you want a serious answer—I don't know. I should feel it a great, an anxious, responsibility. And, since I haven't so much money, nor am ever likely to have'—had she then been looking at her uncle she might have caught a suspicious twinkle from his eye—'why should I bother to inquire of myself what I should do with it?'

'But,' he urged, 'wouldn't you see that all your own people wanted for nothing that they needed or would like?'

'Of course,' she answered; 'but that goes as much without saying as that I should have my own breakfast and dinner, and buy clothes for myself. One's own people ought, I think, to come before all others.'

'Quite so,' said her uncle.—'Well, now, your aunt told me to bring you along to dinner to-night—if you could spare the time—so, if you don't object, we'll walk to Rutland Gate and talk this matter out by the way.—You like walking, I hope?' he asked, seeing something like hesitation on her face.

'Oh yes, uncle,' she answered; 'I like walking, and I'll go with you. But will you let me write a note first? It will only take me two or three minutes.'

This was the business she had turned her thought on: she had promised when in Lancashire to communicate again with her father—or with the person who represented himself as such—as soon as she returned to London; she had been back several days, but she had been able to do nothing for want of money; now, however, that she had money in abundance, she would let no more days slip by without communicating. She therefore sat down at her side-table and wrote a hasty note to the following effect: 'If you will call at your tobacconist's to-morrow evening about the time of the last post, you will receive something from me.' She was determined to be resolved whether this man who wrote to her was her father or no, and her plan was, not to send money in the letter she promised, but to be in the tobacconist's shop with sufficient money in her hand at the time she named, and to speak to the person who inquired for her letter; if that person could satisfy her he was her father, she knew what she would do: if he could not, she still knew what she would do.

Her note she took out in her hand and posted as she passed along with her uncle. But that very night she had a singular and significant adventure which somewhat modified her expectation of her father.

MARINE STOKERS.

That one half of the world does not know how the other half lives is a piece of proverbial lore, the truth of which is undoubted. It is equally open to demonstration that the major portion of ocean voyagers have little or no accurate knowledge of the circumstances under which the humble Stoker or Fireman pursues his necessary calling in the depths of the vessel. In the remote recesses of the steamer, far below the Plimsoll mark, and completely removed from the ken of the saloon passenger, does this useful but despised member of society practise his art of 'poking,' 'slicing,' and 'pricking' the masses of consuming fuel, in order that he may obtain the maximum of heat from each pound of coal burned. Invisible as he usually is, save to his fellow-workers and the engine-room staff, the passengers sometimes catch a glimpse of him as he comes on deck begrimed with coal-dust and bathed in perspiration, for a breath of fresh air. He is on view, however, but a moment, disappearing with mysterious rapidity towards the scene of his labours among the mighty furnaces below the water-line.

A pretty widespread opinion obtains that a fireman is an unskilled labourer, that any one possessing bodily strength and a good constitution

is qualified for the post. This, however, is a great mistake. There are firemen and firemen. A good man will consume less fuel, and yet produce a greater pressure of steam, than a hand who fondly imagines that piling on fuel is the *ne plus ultra* of stoking up. Coals that cake together require to be judiciously 'sliced.' Dirty coals require to be 'pricked.' Some furnaces in which the tubes require a vast surface of heating power necessitate the creation of as much flame as possible. A careless man when engaged in cleaning out a furnace will rake out the clinkers and refuse and at the same time allow the fire to die down. Then, when the furnace door is opened in order to pile on fresh fuel, the cold air is admitted; and the internal mechanism of the furnace, that a few minutes previously was played upon by gases heated to upwards of two thousand degrees Fahrenheit, is now subjected to a draught whose temperature is but fifty or sixty degrees Fahrenheit. The strain caused by such a thermometric range is of the greatest, and a man who knows his business will always avoid it by cleaning out his furnace without suffering the fire to die down any further than is necessary.

In spite of the importance of a stoker's work—for upon him depends in no small degree the amount of work got out of the engines—he undergoes no special training for his vocation. Many so-called firemen never set foot on shipboard until they were shipped as 'firemen.' In some firms the wise plan obtains of promoting scurfers or scalers—that is, boys or young men employed in cleaning out or scraping the boilers and furnaces of steamers when in port—to the post of firemen. This is a plan that works well, the lads looking forward to the extra remuneration that the work brings with it. Every fireman is given a 'discharge' at the end of a voyage, and, strange as it may seem, the custom is almost universal of marking these discharges 'G.' or 'V. G.'—that is, Good or Very Good, so that they are little or no index to a man's behaviour or competence. It would be little use, in fact, marking a man's discharge with any less criticism than 'G.' or 'V. G.,' for then the holder would simply suppress it, and use an older and perhaps better one. Or he might even borrow or buy a discharge from another sea-goer and pass himself off as its possessor. Not long ago, a large steamer left the Thames which included among its complement of firemen a man who had a whole bundle of 'V. G.' discharges, and according to their and his own account, he was a splendid fireman. Before the vessel reached Dover, however, he was dreadfully sea-sick, and it transpired that he was a runaway soldier, who had never been to sea before.

Engineers when they engage firemen do not attach too much importance to a man's discharges. If he is healthy-looking and strong, he is pretty certain to be shipped; and if asked for his last discharge he can easily say he 'has lost it' or 'left it at home'—stock excuses which are taken for what they are worth. It is thus not too much to say that any person of moderate physique can secure a berth as a fireman. Suppose a crew has signed articles, and that when the vessel is ready to sail, there are two or three deserters—the engineers, rather than sail short-handed, will ship the first man available, arguing

that even if he has not been to sea before, he will soon pick up his business, and will be of some use before the voyage is over. At the close of his engagement, he receives his discharge with the usual 'G.' or 'V. G.' conduct mark, and is thus free to compete with firemen of long standing.

It must not be supposed that on shipboard all firemen are rated at one dead-level. The lowest grade is the trimmer or coal-passer; then comes the fireman proper, who may, if he shows steadiness and aptitude, be promoted to the extra remuneration and the less laborious duties of a cleaner and greaser. The greaser in turn may rise to the dignity of a 'donkey man,' and thus superintend the working of the donkey engine, used in discharging or loading cargo, &c. The engine-room is closed to the fireman; there he may not enter. The rank of engineer is not open to him. The certificated engineer, therefore, is very apt to look down upon the poor fireman; in fact, he is regarded as an Ishmaelite. His hand is against everybody, and everybody's is against him. On river-tugs and steam-trawlers firemen may be promoted to take sole charge of the engines of the vessel. Such men are somewhat contemptuously alluded to as 'shovel engineers.' Such is the jealousy with which the marine engineers proper guard all unorthodox initiations into their craft.

The British public is very fond of flattering itself that its seamen are the finest in the world. Many shipmasters and chief engineers would say that the British fireman is the very worst in the world. They do not mean to say that they are incompetent, though many of them doubtless are. They even admit that in a situation calling for resourcefulness and pluck, the British article is second to none. In this connection a chief engineer tells of the following experience: During a storm in which he saw several vessels founder, they had the misfortune to get about seven feet of water in the stokehole and engine-room, and the fires were put out for eighteen hours. Yet they managed to survive the storm; and though, had the firemen been foreigners instead of Englishmen, the chief firmly believed the vessel must have gone to the bottom. The great faults of English firemen are drunkenness and insubordination. Drink they will have; and the drunken orgies into which they plunge after a voyage, especially in a foreign port, are terrible to contemplate.

The reason that they fail to be amenable to discipline is not far to seek. The majority of them have, in sailor parlance, neither 'go to' nor 'come from.' Except in some of the big steamship lines and weekly boats, in which the men are under weekly engagements, the firemen are drawn from the lower strata of society. They have no comfortable home on shore, and but little chance of making one. They become indifferent to their present, and callous to their future lot. The earnings of the voyage are in many cases soon spent in a drunken spree, and the poor fireman must perforce seek another berth or starve. At sea his lot is indeed a hard one. His work is laborious, and performed in a heated atmosphere that renders the task doubly exhausting. From this enervating heat the 'fire-tender' sometimes ventures to the upper deck to cool himself. But even there his hard fortune some-

times pursues him. The weather may be cold and the wind keen and biting, or a green sea may sweep aboard and send the fireman back to his duty a colder and a wetter man. Of the racking a man's constitution must receive by these sudden transitions of temperature it is needless to speak. Or it may be that the sun is blazing down upon the vessel's deck with a tropical fervour, and the stifling air affords but a slight relief to the internal heat of the stokehole. There are probably few sadder pictures than the toil-stained fireman gasping as it were for very breath. Civilisation has brought us many blessings, tempered, however, with sorrow and suffering. Dwellers upon shore are accustomed to compensate themselves for any privation or hard work they may go through by a succeeding period of recreation and leisure. Long ago, Shakespeare remarked that

Some kinds of baseness
Are nobly undergone; and most poor matters
Point to rich ends.

The poor fireman, however, knows no real recreation when his 'watch' is over. His reeking garments must be laid aside in the same quarter where he sleeps. There, too, he must wash himself and eat his food. On the passenger vessels the food is of course varied and well cooked; but on many steamers it is execrably cooked and worse served. The Board of Trade stipulate the minimum of food that each man shall be supplied with, and also the minimum accommodation with which each seaman and fireman must be provided. But the Board of Trade cannot supervise the cooking of the food or compel ship-owners to surround their poorer servants with more humanising environments. The seventy-two feet of cubical space fixed by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 for seamen is quite insufficient for their health and well-being. The confined breathing space leads to an accumulation of foul air which must act deleteriously upon their health. This space is of course curtailed by clothes and various other articles, and the atmosphere is frequently polluted by the cast-off damp garments of the firemen who have just come from duty.

The various port sanitary authorities of Great Britain whose duty it is to inspect shipping were unanimous in adopting a memorial to the Board of Trade that the cubical space per man should be increased to one hundred and fifty feet; that all ironwork in the men's quarters should be covered in, so as to avoid dampness to the bedding, clothing, &c., caused by the sweating of the iron decks; and also that the provision of bath and lavatory accommodation should be made compulsory.

Many steamers are now afloat in which a fireman can have a bath when he is so minded; but it is sad to relate that these efforts for his improvement are not appreciated to the extent they might be. In the words of a chief engineer of great experience: 'Firemen are dirty, and it requires the greatest pressure to compel them to keep their quarters clean and wholesome.' This is a grave charge: but it is one that is supported by the experience of the majority of ship-masters and engineers. It should not, however, discourage humane owners from doing all they can to ameliorate the condition of a neglected but useful body of men.

We have already shown that engineers when they engage their firemen have no *bond fide* evidence either of their character or qualification. The system of discharges at present in operation is a failure. If a man had a continuous record of his voyages which he was compelled to produce before re-engagement, the status of the fireman would be much improved. On all sides the verdict in favour of continuous discharges is unanimously favourable. A man's record of long and good service would then single him out from his inferior comrades, and secure him that higher remuneration and position to which he would be entitled.

Some such method as this has worked very satisfactorily at Bombay. If a man there wishes to become a fireman, he presents himself to the engineers who are likely to have a vacancy. If approved, he receives, on payment of a small fee, a certificate, issued by the shipping-master, bearing on one side a number, his name, place of birth, age, and any distinguishing mark which might be visible upon his person, such as a scar upon the face, a broken finger, or a face badly marked by smallpox, &c. On the other side of the certificate are lines for about eighteen entries, so that the record of the owner's services might be read for about ten years when the certificate was full. For protection, this record of character is enclosed in a tin case bearing the same number as the certificate; and at the date of a fireman signing articles, it is placed in the hands of the master of the ship, and given up with the additional entry when its owner is legally discharged at the end of the voyage.

British firemen are said to often succeed in establishing a species of terrorism in the stokehole, and rendering their superior officers thoroughly afraid of them. They own no restraint, and fulfil the terms of their contract just sufficiently well to escape prosecution for neglect of duty. The experiences of many engineers bear witness to the truth of this. These firemen are of course the baser sort, whom engineers, respectable firemen, and ship-masters would be pleased to see weeded out of the service. What troubles the engineers have with their firemen may be easily imagined from the fact that half of a ship's complement frequently come on shipboard totally unfit for duty, and remain unfit until they have recovered from the debauch which signalled the eve of their departure from port.

The engineers have to take this human *olla podrida* in hand, sort them according to their capabilities, divide them into watches, and initiate them into their duties, and, above all, inculcate habits of discipline and obedience. In this last they sometimes fail deplorably; but the fault is not so much in the firemen themselves as in the miserable surroundings which, since the introduction of steamers, have been regarded as good enough for our marine firemen.

John Chinaman makes a capital fireman. He performs his duties with machine-like precision, and is obedient to a degree that is servile. It is doubtless this quality of abject submission to the commands of his superiors that make him such a favourite with marine engineers. Though less turbulent, however, he is less resourceful and plucky than his British *compère*, and men who know how to rule would rather have English

firemen than a specially selected complement of 'Celestials.' The Chinese give a minimum of trouble. The head man is first engaged, and he brings along with him his own staff, so that the European engineers have that worry taken off their hands. But the Chinaman has practically no individuality. They represent in the aggregate the stoking staff of the ship. Apart from that, they are not considered.

A British vessel trading for fifteen months in Chinese waters had a full complement of Chinese firemen. At the commencement of the voyage, the names were entered on the ship's books. At the end of the voyage the roll was called and each name was responded to. Yet desertions and changes among the firemen had been frequent during the voyage. The mystery was not explained until it became known that each new comer gave up his old name and took that of his predecessor among the stokers of the vessel. He answered at musters to that name, and thus the nominal coherency of the crew was maintained. Italians, too, are much in demand for firemen. They are described as hard-working and respectful, evincing a fondness, however, for wine-drinking when on shore, though it is very rarely that they indulge to such an extent as to incapacitate them for work.

There is an old saw that bears witness to the consequences of giving a dog a bad name. The truth of the adage has been abundantly proved in the history of the British fireman. He has so long suffered under an evil reputation, that by many he is regarded as quite out of the pale of humanising influences. On the whole, however, he has been more sinned against than sinning. His improvidence and insubordination are rather the resultant of a pernicious system of selection, combined with chronic neglect, than his own bringing about. The part he has played in the development of Great Britain's mercantile marine is a most important one, and common gratitude should ensure a more considerate treatment than has been meted out to him. Legislation alone is powerless to heal the sore.

The poet had a consummate knowledge of human nature who sang:

How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.

What is wanted is sympathy, real heartfelt sympathy. The fore-castle and the stoke-hole need not necessarily be brutalising and debasing influences. Even from the low stand-point of personal interest it would 'pay' to secure a better class of firemen. Ship-owners who have experimented in this direction by making their seamen's quarters more home-like, are rewarded by attracting to their service a superior class of men. The ship-owning class as a whole is keenly alive to any saving that may be effected by the adoption of improved mechanical appliances; but it seems strange that they should overlook the advantages to be derived from improving their *animated* machines, the firemen. It is by no means a *sine quâ non* that a fireman should be drunken, lawless, coarse, and ignorant. Education will teach him to perform his work in a more intelligent manner. Habits of order and sobriety will remove much of the friction from life on shipboard, and the combined operation

of these kindly influences will do much to make the poor and despised fireman a better workman and a better citizen, and more worthy the great mercantile marine, of whose *personnel* he forms so necessary a part.

'THE HINT O' HAIRST.'

CHAPTER III.

THAT one moment, not longer than any other moment, though so much fuller and more precious, Aveline had given to the Past to keep very carefully, and it was laid away among sweet flowers and scents and sweeter memories.

She had now a sort of right in Willie Gordon; he would write to her, and tell her of his arrival and his doings and the date of his return; it made her happy to know she might feel anxious about his welfare and his comfort; nothing was ever prettier than the little frown of distress she wore on the morning of his departure for Edinburgh. She saw him drive by in the pelt-ing rain and his collar was not even turned up! Silly fellow, to get wet at the beginning of his journey; but then her tender care gave way to pride and glory in her Willie. Rain? Cold? What had weather to do with him? He was one of the people whom storms cannot shatter nor ice freeze! Ah, she was a very proud and happy girl indeed.

She sang a good deal in these days; when she was sure that only the squirrels and the wood-mice could hear her, she sang the little song about Yarrow. Twice she met the postman near the laurel bushes of the Manse Gate, blushing royally when she took her letter from him.

Among certain beautiful things in one letter was the news that Willie was going to London, and would therefore be away three weeks altogether at least; so, as she might not yet take pleasure in the thought of his return, she sat hours by the river thinking over their parting, which had been also their meeting, and dreaming ecstatically of that one moment when he had held her in his arms—a moment that would surely sing through all her life—a moment that could never be forgotten or outdone.

Always a very loving, sympathetic nature, she grew more so; to be loving, to be tender, to be gentle, came easier than ever; and when she sat by sick children in the village, or talked to old women whose sunshine she had been for years, her eyes had learned a smile more winning, her voice had found a note more plaintively wooing than the blue stockdove's in the high fir-tops on the hill-crest when she plains for her mate.

She was so happy, she knew herself so beloved (Willie had written from Edinburgh), that she wanted to make every sorrowful thing more cheerful, wanted to dry every eye; suffering seemed more than ever wrong and terrible to her; and when she sat smoothing the rough brown hair from Maggie Sinclair's hot forehead the day before the child died, Aveline found herself very bitter against the fate that overtook the little girl and caused her to leave her play-mates and the bright world that was all smiling for her.

To think that Sir John, himself an invalid, fenced in by every comfort, should have so little care for the people who, ill in the midst of their wretched surroundings, saw nothing but a few hours' suffering between themselves and death! As she picked up the little yellow kitten that had been dead Maggie's constant playmate, and looked round the miserable cottage, a feeling of loathing for the selfishness that permitted such things seemed to choke her; Dr Herries, who attended equally the baronet and the villagers, was a toady, and a man with as little sympathy as a block of granite; he would never represent their case to the landlord, as he so easily might have done, because, so far as Sir John was concerned, his practice at Foresk House would have been gone for ever, and with it a good slice of his income.

The cottagers had nothing to hope from Dr Herries, whose assistant put up the same eight-draught bottle of 'Mixture' for a sciatic trouble or a diseased lung—so it had been whispered in the village.

Aveline was sitting in the cottage of a widow woman called Barclay, whose youngest child had fallen sick the day before; she was revolving all these things in her mind, this bright, sunny afternoon, nursing the little four-year-old and singing song after song to it in a hushed voice; but no charm of hers could get the blue eyes to close in healthful sleep, no lullaby calm the fever that burned in the little body, no drink her skilful hands could prepare ease the torture of the small white throat.

That morning her father and mother had been speaking of diphtheria, had been saying that possibly that was what had swept off little Maggie Sinclair; but the minister had declared that the swiftness of the disease bore no resemblance to the action of diphtheria—diphtheria could keep you months wrestling with it, could make you delirious for weeks: no, what they seemed to take in the village was not diphtheria. Mr Lockhart was one of those wise men who never get past a precedent in their own experience; whole volumes of accumulated fact did not have half the value of a single instance which had come under his own observation; consequently, his judgment was apt to be narrow and unsound, for he never counted the exceptions to a rule, the extraneous circumstances, nor the modifying considerations.

How the big sun was shining outside the cottage room! It was one of those autumn days upon which we cannot see him; he had hung, with a certain massive coyness, a curtain of shimmering golden haze before his face, and pale blue rifts of mist floated over the distant woods and stole up the hill-sides to join their fleecy-white sisters on the top.

'Wee Meery,' as her mother called her, was very silent now; the soft hushed groans had stopped, and the breaths came with more and more difficulty. Aveline hung over the child a moment and then decided to get a neighbouring woman: there was Mrs Ballantyne, a few houses down the road, who would come, she knew. As she stopped in the doorway to put on her hat, a carriage and pair passed quickly; it was the Gordon livery, and Lady Gordon and Rose sat in it. Lady Gordon was looking down slightly,

and she had a veil on; Aveline could not see the expression of her face; but Rose was very upright, and with a curiously hard look about her eyes and mouth, which rather marred her resemblance to Willie. Neither of them saw Miss Lockhart; and she herself, as she hurried for Mrs Ballantyne, wondered what could have given Willie's sister that expression; she had no idea what Rose suffered on driving through this ill-treated village, where, on every side, marks of her brother's criminal selfishness greeted her. 'But he will suffer for his wrongdoing!' she said often in her heart, with a rather Scotch sense of the punishment that rarely tarried; 'he will suffer; perhaps that is why he is suffering so. No; now it is only his sins to himself that he is expiating!—Ah, poor John! And no one suffers singly; what he is bringing upon mother and Willie and me!'

Lady Gordon and she were going to make two or three calls upon distant acquaintances, and Rose's thoughts were very stern, and far removed from the ordinary lightness demanded by social intercourse as she drove along.

Mrs Ballantyne was out—Mrs Ballantyne had just gone 'down by.' That meant to the village shop, no doubt!

Should Aveline run there, or would it be better to go back to the child? Yes, decidedly; let her go back to the child; something told her it was dying, poor pretty 'wee Meery'—and nothing could be done for it now. She had seen Maggie Sinclair die three days ago—she knew what they looked like when they were dying. Tears in her eyes and her heart wringing, she hurried back. The cottage door was open, and some one was leaning over the bed—it was the mother, and a sore cry of 'Oh, the wee lambie! Auch the wee lambie!' came at regular intervals as the woman rocked herself to and fro on one knee with the little body in her arms.

'Oh, Mrs Barclay!—I had just run out to get Mrs Ballantyne to come. I haven't been gone five minutes,' began Aveline, shocked to think she had left her post, no matter for what good reason; that Mrs Barclay should have seen the little thing lying there all alone!

For the poor mother, led by some subtle instinct, had come back from the turnip hoeing—and she had found wee Meery dead.

Three-quarters of an hour later, Aveline Lockhart stood on the steps of Foresk House; her excitement was so excessive that it seemed ages to her before any one answered her ring; at last a maid-servant appeared.

'Can I see Sir John?' she asked, in a voice which a very great effort had made calm.

The woman looked at her; the long, quick walk had made Aveline's cheeks rosy and her hair wild; she looked lovelier than usual, but, to the discreet housemaid's conventional eyes, only untidy; besides, no one ever asked for Sir John, and Miss Lockhart was not on visiting terms with the family.

'Master never sees visitors, Miss, unless they are very intimate friends with the family,' said Jane, with a magnificent Servants'-hall snub.

'Will you be good enough to ask if he will see me?—I have no card with me, but say Miss Lockhart.'

Jane sniffed at being offered no card, and held her salver very ostentatiously in front of her; she was not accustomed to opening the door to people who possessed no cards; the few people who did come to Foresk House were county people, hall-marked by their estates, and to them Jane's manner was very different.

'Please go and ask Sir John to spare me five minutes, if he feels well enough!'

While this colloquy was going on, a young man appeared at the window, which, carefully curtained, yet allowed a view of the steps; it was Sir John himself, and he was quite interested and amused. Who was this young woman with the pale golden hair streaming round her glowing cheeks, and a figure as slight and slim as a London lady's? He thought he would send Jeffreys to find out.

Jeffreys, profiting by a rather calmer mood of his master's, had slipped down-stairs to have a chat with the other servants, and was for once not in attendance. Very slowly and carefully, but with pale eyes all lit up, Sir John moved across to the door, and opening it behind its thick portière, called, 'Jane!'

There was a smile on his lips, an alteration in his whole appearance; he felt more as he had been used to feel when he was well, strong, and able to be as wicked as he wished.

The servant came at once.

'Who is that at the door?'

'Miss Lockhart, from the Manse, sir, and she was asking to see you.'

'And you have left her waiting on the door-step?' Sir John was well aware that he must be overheard, and infused a tone of severe displeasure into his melodious, cultivated voice, a voice that was much softer, much sweeter, most people would have said, than Willie's. 'I shall speak to you another time, Jane; beg Miss Lockhart to walk in.'

He remained near the door, pale, handsome, interesting, and full of a grave, delicate courtesy that had served him so well in other years.

Aveline, in the brown stuff gown and wide brown hat, hair flying, cheeks flushing, and her eyes dark with some emotion as yet unexplained, came in. Sir John bowed with a deference that had never failed to be impressive, as coming from himself, and shut the door behind him, letting the great red portière fall into a sombre background.

'Don't think I am going to ask you why you want to see me; I fear it is only to ask my aid in some parish charity; count on me for that, please; but let me say that to a very dull, disconsolate invalid you are the most delightfully unexpected apparition, Miss Lockhart: my fairy godmother has been thinking of me.'

Almost too confused to reply to the elegant playfulness of this speech, Aveline murmured something about having ventured to apply to him, and hoping that her visit was not inad-vertent.

He had put a finger on the bell; and the astounded Jeffreys, posted up by Jane, and only too charmed to have an opportunity of seeing with his own eyes, appeared with unaccustomed alacrity.

'Tea!' said Sir John, very softly, and barely turning his head. Jeffreys vanished, determined

to observe more fully when he came in with the tea.

'Sir John, I have done a very bold thing in coming here like this, and I am sure you will believe that I must have some very strong reason indeed for coming! I have just seen a sight of very great sadness, if you could imagine'—So much Aveline managed to say of the speech she had thought out and rehearsed during her walk to Foresk; so much and no more, for Sir John interrupted her, courteously, even charmingly, but authoritatively. He had scarcely taken in what she said; he only knew she was stating the object of her visit, was, perhaps, about to go into details with regard to this Charity regarding which she had conceived the happy notion of begging personally; she was a Minister's daughter, and should be well up in these things, but they were nothing to him; he supposed he could lay his hand on a five-pound note before she left; but meantime, he wanted the novel pleasure of her visit to be unspoiled by practical considerations.

He was looking at her hair, her colour, the outline of her face, her eyes—by Jove, what eyes!—and her mouth; best of all, her mouth. What a freshness, what a curve, what coy corners it had; how it would lend itself to the saying of everything that was sweet and charming; how suited, too, to kisses. A mouth to fall in love with decidedly! Then the seriousness of the whole face! the earnestness of the straight brows—the Charity was evidently very precious to Miss Lockhart's simple, inexperienced, country soul; and Sir John was immensely amused at what he considered the inappropriateness of her expression. Good Heavens, to think of a face like that existing down at Ardlach!

Oh, she must not be allowed to state her case at once, or she would be finished and go away. He smiled whimsically.

'Do you know, Miss Lockhart, I am going to exercise my privilege as an invalid, and I am going to ask you to humour me in something. I don't know when I shall have the pleasure of another visit from you, so I want to make the most of this one: will you please me by trying to imagine you have known me before, will you allow me to treat you as though I had already enjoyed your friendship for some time? I don't know if you'll agree with me, but I always regret the amount of time one is obliged to throw away upon preliminaries; afterwards, when acquaintanceship has ripened to friendship, the preliminaries do seem so *banal*—now, I'm sure you've found that?' he smiled at her with an almost child-like appeal in his eyes.

'Living here, almost alone—for in my state of health relatives prove peculiarly—what shall I say?—trying seems too strong, but at anyrate—living almost alone makes me very grateful for an occasion like the present when I am charged with the entertainment of a young lady.'

Aveline had never been spoken to like this before; it made her very uncomfortable; but she told herself that this poor Sir John must have a very dull, wretched sort of life on the whole, and that she ought to say something sympathetic, even if the whole time she were thinking how much more needful of pity were some others. . . .

'I am afraid you must feel it very much, not

being able to go out or—but no doubt you read a great deal?' with delicate tact, pausing in the enumeration of those pleasures he must miss, and going on to the possible advantages of his confinement.

'Yes, I do!—Oh, I read, of course, a great deal!' said Sir John, with a simple disregard of fact that almost caused Jeffreys to blink as he brought in the tea-things.—'Is there no buttered toast?' turning to the servant.—'I confess to the fondness of a schoolboy for buttered toast, Miss Lockhart!'

Jeffreys explained that there was some, he was just bringing it.

When everything was arranged, and the man had left the room, Sir John said: 'Now!'—in a tone of high pleasure—'you will pour out for me, won't you? And open your jacket, for I know this room is very hot! I have to have a fire almost always.'

'I don't think I want any tea, thank you,' said Aveline at last, feeling more and more oppressed by Sir John's possessive manner. 'No, really; I don't feel inclined for any! I have gone through so much this afternoon!'

'Well, then, I shall pour you out a cup, and try and persuade you to take some! After your walk, it will pick you up!' He poured out a cup carefully, smiling at her inquiringly before he put in both sugar and cream; then he brought it over and placed it on a small carved-oak stool, which he moved near her chair. Then he paused just opposite her. 'You are really looking pale and faint,' he said with commiseration, 'and I know exactly what you need! Now you are under orders, Miss Lockhart, I get so much doctoring that I am thinking of taking a diploma myself without further study. Here!'—he had been walking about his room as he spoke, but he came to his place just in front of her holding a very small glass with some clear yellowish-green stuff in it. 'Drink it! you will find it very nice,' he said.

Mechanically, Aveline took the glass, more to break the spell of the strange smile with which his eyes sought and seemed to search her face. She sipped it and put it down. 'Now, you must regard it as medicine, and take it all while we are talking,' he added, still playfully, and seated himself, with a cup of tea, and, this time, in a chair closer to her own.

'How is it, Miss Lockhart, that I have never seen you before? Forgive me, it sounds rude, but I have not even heard of you, except vaguely, and the whole place ought to ring with praises of a face like yours.'

This was too much for Aveline; she felt some half-angry tears coming to her eyes; she put down the half-finished glass of liqueur and stood up. 'I must be going!' she said, almost shyly—she was so confused, she had found everything so different from what she had expected; the burst of feeling that had been strong enough to decide her on taking this peculiar course, on appealing personally to Sir John, had become diffused now in mere excitement and a sort of tremor; if she had been successful, there would have been something to write to Willie, but that he should ever hear of this visit—oh, she must get away! But first, an effort, one effort for the cause she had so at heart.

'Not so soon! Oh, please not so soon! We have not had our chat!' He got up, slowly, and with obvious pain, and took in both of his the hand she mechanically held out to him. He looked at her now with a sort of poetic wistfulness in his eyes. 'Well, if you will go, forgive my asking one question. Tell me your name, will you? Have they given you a name to suit yourself? Do you know, Miss Lockhart'—in a little burst of apology—'I cannot talk to you in the ordinary way; whether it is the unexpectedness of your appearance, or just your strong personal charm, I don't know—but you seem to me to be the heroine, the Lady fair, out of some old ballad or song—you are yourself just a song and a poem!' Nobody could do this sort of thing better than Sir John when he liked; if, owing to unfriendly circumstances, he had to put into a first interview what would have come better in a third, it was not his fault! 'Am I to hear the name?'

'My name is Aveline,' said the perplexed girl, trying to draw away her hand; 'and really, now I must hurry home; but first'—

'Let me at least thank you for coming!'—they were standing up, and he was very near to her, excitement was making him quite strong again, then reflectively, murmuringly: 'Aveline—it is lovely! The Lady Aveline!—Good-bye!—Stay, I may kiss your hand in homage?' He did so delicately, a long, thoughtful sort of kiss, which sent a shiver all through Aveline's frame in spite of the fact—which she had tried repeatedly to remember—that he was Willie's brother. For a moment her head swam, but she recovered herself with Sir John's next phrase: 'You will come again to tell me of the business that is in your mind, for which I am flattering myself that you want my help!—It is too late to-day, and I am perhaps giving myself the excitement of too much pleasure!' This he said cleverly enough. He would appear weary, and then she would not worry him with her charity; if she really cared about it, she could come again; if not, he would have had the small amusement of one visit; he would have enjoyed the near presence of this beautiful woman for half an hour at least.

'It will not take a moment, but I must tell you now!' she said firmly. 'I have come from the village. Have you heard how unhappy they are there?—Oh, Sir John, if you could have seen Mrs Sinclair crying when her little girl died, as I did three days ago—you would have been sorry—oh—sorry! Such a lovely little girl, so fair, so bright—and only eight years old! It was the damp, unhealthy room they had to live in that gave her the disease. Mr Bowers, your factor, is so hard and cruel, and I am sure you never hear of these things yourself, or you would not allow them to go on! So many of them are ill or sickly, and when the bright healthy children die, it is—it is time'— She could not help it; she had seen these things herself, and she was sobbing through her appeal. How lovely she looked with all April in her face! Even if it was the old, tiresome story—it seemed worth listening to in this new form.

'My dear Miss Lockhart!' he said, putting one hand on her shoulder, standing very close, and bending his head quite near to the fair curls—'My dear Miss Lockhart, you must not allow

these things to distress you so deeply! The village people have so many children, you know! Far more than they can comfortably support; it is providential whenever one or two of them drop off early; it saves so much expense!—But really, I cannot bear to see you so unhappy!—Ah! you think me heartless?

'Very heartless, terribly heartless, if you mean what you say!' Aveline said suddenly and in a firmer voice.

'Well, anything to cheer you up, you know.'

'Oh, don't mind about me; what are a few tears from me? If you had seen and heard what I have this afternoon, I think—I think you would have cried too! Oh! poor Mrs Barclay; she is a widow with four children, so hard-working, poor woman, and just because she has no husband to make a fuss, Bowers treats her worse than the others. Her house is a perfect fever den—Dr Herries himself said so; he said only people of their class and rats could live and breathe in such surroundings—I heard him say it. But even he is wrong! and they can't live, poor things. Mrs Barclay's youngest child died to-day, died very nearly in my arms, after being ill only two days! I had been nursing it and soothing it all the afternoon, and'—

'What!' cried Sir John on a sharp high note—'what?' He put his hand to his head and reeled back against the black oak cabinet—his face was livid with fright. 'You have come straight from a place where there is fever—typhus, no doubt; you have been hanging over some wretched brat, absorbing all the infection, and you come *here*—and to *me*!' He was gasping, pale, hysterical—almost speechless; his voice lost all its melody, and came high and cracked—he leaned there, holding the woodwork with his nervous hands, staring at her in incredulous horror.

'I came to tell you! I thought if once you knew of the sufferings of your poor tenants, you would see that something was done; I only thought that if I could speak to you myself—I who had seen it all, who had seen these poor little things die'—

'And you come here to me, in my delicate state of health, carrying death in your garments? Don't you know what infection is?—haven't you heard of typhus fever? Stand away, stand back! You must be mad to do such a thing; you have conspired to *kill me*, do you hear, TO KILL ME!'

All of a sudden this almost shriek died away, and Sir John tumbled to the floor, foam and blood coming from his mouth. Aveline rushed to the bell and rang it; she had never thought of this; whatever her feelings about Sir John might be, she had never paused to consider the question of possible infection. For herself, she was brave enough; she thought as little of herself as the young baronet had done! But—

Jeffreys' slow, dignified step quickened when he saw his master.

'You had better go, Miss,' he said respectfully, looking up as he knelt above Sir John. 'Master often faints if he is over-excited; I expect that's just what it is; he's not used to seeing people. He'll come round soon; but if I was you, Miss, I'd just go home.'

The man's manner was not offensive, though familiar.

Aveline said a few words in explanation,

expressed a hope that Sir John would be none the worse, and hastily left.

She went home by the woods, and crossed the little bridge. She had made a terrible mistake in her eager, impulsive desire to act decisively, practically in this difficult matter.

What would Willie think of her unwisdom when she came to tell him, or when he came to hear?

About Sir John's unblushing selfishness she never thought for a moment; he was certainly beneath contempt; but for her own rashness she had unstinted blame and deep regret these many days.

THE ANCIENT BOMBARDS OF THE DARDANELLES.

To England, as ruler of the ocean, there are three narrow slips of salt water of inestimable importance—the British Channel, the Strait of Gibraltar, and the Suez Canal; but second only to these three stand the Dardanelles, connecting the Mediterranean with the Sea of Marmora, and the Bosphorus, joining the latter with the Black Sea. In case of a war with Russia and an advance by that power on India, the advantages of being able to operate on the shores of the Black Sea with an open waterway to Cyprus, Malta, and home, seem obvious. The Porte perfectly appreciates the importance to her of these inland waters of the Turkish Empire, and has recently employed General Brialmont—probably the first military engineer on the Continent—to survey and report on the defence of the Dardanelles. His complete scheme, which includes every weapon of modern defence, is probably far too expensive for Turkey; but some modification may be adopted.

The British Mediterranean fleet passed up the Dardanelles without permission in the early part of 1878, and many who served in that fleet will remember the discussions about a certain forty-ton Krupp gun which looked down one reach of the Dardanelles, and was considered as a sort of keystone to the defences. In those days, Russia had no fleet worth mentioning in the Black Sea. But short as the time is since then, every one of our ships and guns that went through the Dardanelles is practically obsolete; the Dardanelles themselves require re-fortifying and re-arming; the Black Sea fleet of Russia is already formidable; and in 1903, Russia will have eight ten-thousand-ton ironclads, with cruisers, gunboats, and many torpedo boats, inside the Bosphorus. There is not on record a more striking example of the rapid changes in modern armaments, accentuating the sharp contrasts between the eager strife in our times for the most advanced weapons and the grim old guardians which forbade the right of way to and from the Mediterranean from the days of Agincourt to the days of the Franco-Prussian War—the Ancient Bombards of the Dardanelles.

General Lefroy, R.A., F.R.S., in an able paper dated June 1868, said: 'The great cannon of the Dardanelles have been a subject of wonder to travellers and of interest to artillerymen from the earliest period. There are no other examples of guns which have remained in use for four

centuries, and are still in a very real sense effective pieces of ordnance. They testify to the former energy and power of the Ottoman race as no other military monument does, and remind us of an event which has had a greater influence on the politics of Europe than almost any other within the same period—namely, the fall of Constantinople. Monuments of the military genius of Mohammed II., they remind us also of the “splendour and the havoc of the East” by their prodigious size and cost and power. As a matter of fact, the batteries at the Dardanelles were unique in having such a number of these immense old guns massed together; but there were single specimens scattered all over the civilised world, among them the great bombard of Ghent, called by medieval writers ‘Dulle Griete,’ ‘Marguerite Enragée,’ or ‘Raging Meg,’ dating from 1430, and weighing thirteen tons. Of this gun, Froissart says that when fired it made such a noise that it seemed that ‘tous les diables d’enfer fussent en chemin.’ The Malik-i-Maidan, or ‘Lord of the Country,’ the great gun of Bejjapore, weight forty tons, throwing a thousand-pound ball, and long an object of worship to the Hindus, who placed money and flowers in its muzzle, was cast at Ahmednuggur in 1548. The ‘Czar Pooschka,’ or great gun of Moscow, date 1586, having probably the largest bore (thirty-six inches) of any gun ever cast—as the weapon constructed by Mallet in the ‘fifties’ to be used against Sebastopol was a mortar—was thirty-eight and a half tons in weight. The ‘Dhool Dhanee,’ or great gun of Agra, cast in 1628, and broken up in 1832, weighed thirty tons, and had a bore of twenty-three inches. Two English guns at Mont St Michel are interesting, as they date from before 1423, or from a period coeval with Agincourt, though of small dimensions comparatively, being only of about sixty-six to one hundred and six hundredweight, but of the respectable calibre of nineteen and fifteen inches respectively. ‘Mons Meg,’ or the old gun of Edinburgh Castle, was cast, according to an old legend of Galloway, in 1455; she weighs five and three-quarter tons, and has a twenty-inch bore.

As isolated specimens and survivals, all these old guns are very interesting, and the more so from the fact that they, together with the Dardanelles guns, have a family likeness, and all are probably derived from an original Flemish stock. They were usually cast in two parts, and screwed together, each half being furnished with massive projecting rings with holes like those in a capstan head cast in them for the insertion of levers for screwing and unscrewing. The very large screws used for the joining together of these parts must have required great skill in casting. The process of unscrewing one of these guns was actually performed by the engineer officers of Her Majesty's Ship *Terrible* in 1868, when one was sent to England as a present to Her Majesty the Queen from the unfortunate Sultan Abdul Aziz.

The Osmanli nation when left alone moves slowly: the writer well remembers to have seen still placed in battery in Cyprus, when that island was taken over by us in 1878, several beautiful brass Venetian guns which had been cast at different dates between 1500 and 1590.

They were ornamented with the winged lion of St Mark; and each, besides its proportion of round and grape shot, had some very curious jointed bar-shot.

The size and power of the Turkish guns, and their liberal supply of ammunition and stores, seem always to have impressed observers. Kritobulos, a Greek, writing in 1467, describes the casting of one of their heavy cannon. The mould was made of ‘very fat clay,’ kneaded for several days, and mixed with linen, hemp, and shreds into a tough compact mass; it was then formed into a very long cylinder as a core or mandrel; and another shape of the same material was prepared hollow, and as if intended as a sheath for the first, but larger, and ‘such as to leave a void space between the two’ to receive the melted bronze when it flowed out from the furnaces to take the form of a cannon.

To load the bombards, the gunners filled the chamber or breech end of the bore, which was smaller than the muzzle end, with the powder. Over the powder went a wooden wad or stopper, which they battered down with iron rammers. Finally, the shot was rammed hard in, so as to make a hollow in the wooden wad. Having laid the gun for the object ‘according to the rules of their art,’ it was wedged in its position by great beams of timber, to prevent it jumping and recoiling. A train was then laid to the vent and fired.

In 1478, or eleven years after the date when Kritobulos wrote, Mohammed II., in forming the siege of Scutari, in Albania, employed fourteen heavy bombards, the lightest of which threw a stone shot of 370 pounds weight, two sent shot of 500 pounds, two of 750 pounds, two of 850 pounds, one of 1200 pounds, five of 1500 pounds, and one of the enormous weight of 1640 pounds, enormous even in these days, for the only guns whose shot exceed the heaviest of these are our eighty-ton gun, throwing a 1700-pound projectile; our 100 ton, throwing one of 2000 pounds; and the 110 ton, throwing an 1800-pound shot with a high velocity. The stone shot of Mohammed's guns varied between twenty and thirty-two inches in diameter, about the same height as a dining-table; 2534 of them were fired on this occasion, weighing, according to a calculation of General Lefroy's—from whose valuable paper many of these and following data are obtained—about one thousand tons, and were cut out of the solid rock on the spot. Assuming twenty-four inches as the average diameter of the shot fired at this siege, the total area of the surface dressed was nearly 32,000 square feet. At this siege the weight of the powder fired is estimated by General Lefroy to have been two hundred and fifty tons. At the siege of Rhodes, in 1480, Mohammed caused sixteen basilisks or double cannon to be cast on the spot, throwing balls two to three feet in diameter.

Many travellers have described the guns or bombards of the Dardanelles, which were formerly very numerous. Monsieur Thevenot (1655), though he did not land, says he could ‘privately discern with a perspective glass—on the European side—about twenty portholes level with the water, in which there are guns of such prodigious bore that I was assured that a man might easily creep into them;’ though on the Asiatic side there were

not so many. Bishop Pococke (1740) makes the number twenty-two on the European or north side, and twenty on the south side, stating that there were fourteen large brass cannon without carriages on the shore always loaded with stone balls, ready either to sink a ship refusing to wait and be searched, or to answer a salute with ball. As these heavy projectiles naturally caused damage where they fell, the land opposite paid no rent; the bore was two feet in diameter, the stone ball weighed fourteen quintals (1400 pounds), and the powder-charge weighed 250 pounds. There were eight other cannon to the south. The castle on the Asiatic side had twenty large brass guns, one of which was of great size, but not so large as on the European side. The Bishop particularly noticed two guns—one twenty-five feet long, the other twenty feet, and ornamented with the fleur-de-lis, which was believed to be a decoration employed by the Emperors of the East before the French used those arms. Some of these monsters were perhaps cast at Adrianople, from which city it took two months to transport them to Constantinople, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles.

Baron de Tott (1770), speaking of one of these large guns or bombards, says that it was made of brass in two parts, joined together by a screw; its breech rested against strong masonry: he loaded it with 330 pounds of powder and a globe of stone weighing 1100 pounds, to the terror of the adjacent Turks, who declared that the concussion would shake down the city. On firing, says the Baron, 'I took my station behind the stonework, and felt a shock like an earthquake. At the distance of 800 fathoms I saw the ball divide into three pieces; and these fragments of a rock crossed the strait, covering the surface in a foam, and went bounding up the opposite shore, rebounding from the mountain.' De Hammer says of these heavy bombards: 'I myself have seen one at the Dardanelles: its mouth was so vast that a little while before my arrival a tailor chased by his creditors squatted in it, and there remained hidden for many days.' The illustrious Von Moltke (1829), then a Major, says that there are 'sixty-three kamerlicks or guns which throw stone balls, some of which are 1050 pounds weight. These gigantic guns are some of them 28·8 inches in diameter, and a man may creep into them up to the breech. They lie on ground on sleepers of oak, instead of gun-carriages, and their butts against strong walls, so as to prevent recoil, as it would be impossible to run them forward in action.'

Mr Wrench, Her Majesty's vice-consul at the Dardanelles (1868), gives a list of twenty-one guns, several of which have since been broken up. Eleven stood in Fort Kilit Bahar, on the European side; and ten in Fort Chanak Kalesi, on the Asiatic side. Of those on the European side two threw shot of 1245 pounds; three, of 1000 pounds; and the remainder threw shot diminishing in weight to about 400 pounds. On the south side the guns threw shot varying in weight from 436 to 670 pounds. The powder-charge in the largest guns weighed 70·7 pounds, and decreased to 28·3 in the lightest. Some of the guns are marked by hostile shot, one, a 670-pounder, has eleven shot-marks on it. This one was cast in 1521, and has a second date, 1126 of

the Hegira, or Anno Domini 1714—the period of preparations for war against Venice. Another gun of the same size has six shot-marks; and another, one such mark. The known dates of the casting of these venerable guardians of the Dardanelles are from 1458, nearly contemporaneous with the commencement of the Wars of the Roses, to 1521, or after the battle of Flodden.

The most celebrated occasion when these guns were used in battle was in 1807, and their target was a portion of the British fleet. In 1806, Russia having picked a quarrel with Turkey about the Hospodars of Moldavia and Wallachia, overran the former province, taking Bender, Choczin, and Jassy; and as England was at that time an ally of Russia, it is scarcely necessary to add that Sebastiani, the ambassador of Napoleon at Constantinople, promptly sided with Turkey. As the French had an army of forty thousand men in Dalmatia, Mr Arbuthnot, the British Minister, suggested to Collingwood that the presence of a British squadron at Constantinople would be advantageous. Collingwood, at that time Commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, detached Sir Thomas Louis with three sail of the line and a frigate, who went up to Constantinople, and withdrew the British and Russian Ministers, and met Admiral Sir John Duckworth with five more sail of the line, another frigate, and two bomb-vessels, at Besika Bay. The last two gave much trouble afterwards, as they had to be towed through the Dardanelles, and their magazines were above the water-line. The whole squadron were at that anchorage—which is about five miles from the mouth of the Dardanelles to the south—on the 10th February 1807; and there they were detained by strong adverse gales till the 19th. On the night of the 11th, His Majesty's ship *Ajax*, 74 guns (under Captain Blackwood), at about nine p.m. took fire, and in ten minutes was in a blaze fore and aft. Her cables being burned through, she drifted on to the island of Tenedos, where, at five next morning, she blew up: 250 of her 700 men were destroyed. Captain Blackwood had commanded the *Euryalus* frigate at Trafalgar, sixteen months before, and had been 'repeater' of Nelson's signals. On the 19th, the squadron proceeded up the Dardanelles, the *Canopus*—a noble 80-gun ship, taken from the French—leading. At 9.30, the forts fired, and the ships sustained some damage. On the 20th, after some skirmishing, the squadron anchored off Prince's Island, near Constantinople—where, seventy-one years later, the British ironclads, under Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby, anchored. Here a demand was made for the Turkish fleet and arsenal—a demand not complied with—and some letters were interchanged, the time elapsing being employed energetically by the Turks in strengthening all the batteries along the Strait. Finally, the squadron had to retreat, as it was far too weak to enforce its claims. On the 2d of March the squadron left Prince's Island and anchored that night. On the morning of the 3d it weighed and formed line in close order of battle, with the bomb-vessels in tow, *Canopus* still leading. At 10 a.m. the battery on Point Pesques opened fire, which was promptly returned. At 10.40 the castle of Abydos opened on the *Canopus*, and on the remainder in succession. At 11.40 the whole squadron had passed the line of batteries,

and in the evening it anchored seven miles off. It consisted of six line-of-battle ships, two frigates, and two bombs. The action had been short, but our ships had suffered severely. The *Royal George*, 100 guns (flag), had her cut-water partly torn off, and was nearly sunk by an 800-pound shot: she lost three killed, and twenty-seven wounded. The *Repulse*, 74 guns, had ten men killed and ten wounded by another. *Canopus*, 80 guns, had her wheel shot away, and nearly took the ground under the batteries, by another. *Windsor Castle*, 98 guns, her mainmast nearly cut in two by an 800-pound shot, three killed, thirteen wounded. *Standard*, 64 guns, was struck by a single shot from *Sestos*, weighing 770 pounds, which killed eight and wounded forty-nine men. The *Active* frigate was struck on the port bow by a granite shot, which rolled along the deck and stopped at the main hatchway. Another, after wrecking the fore-castle barricade between two ports, destroyed three planks of the deck, and went out through the opposite side and plunged into the sea. A third lodged just above the water-line, and then fell out. Two men were seen to put their heads out through the hole it had made. The *Thunderer*, 74 guns, had two ports knocked into one by a single shot. In this very remarkable engagement the weapons of the Plantagenet and early Tudor periods were pitted against those of the late Georgian era, and certainly did not come off second best!

THE ETHICS OF FOOD!!

Soon after our marriage, my wife, who is somewhat of a stickler for hygiene, found the advertisement of a course of lectures on the Ethics of Food under our knocker, and brought it in to me.

'George dear, isn't it fortunate? You know you were telling me the other day that disease is often communicated by food—and here's the very thing we want. A Course of six Lectures on the Something or other of Food; only a guinea the course, and by Professor Spatling too. Don't you think, as you're always so busy writing, I'd better go and see what the lectures are like? It'll be so useful to know what one is eating.'

The only occasion on which I had spoken on the subject at all was one Sunday afternoon, when I had read from the *British Weekly* a question from a correspondent, 'Whether tomatoes were ever the cause of cancer?' and had remarked on the improbability of such an event. But then I was newly married, and unused to the ways of woman, or possibly unduly tolerant; so I made only a faint murmur at 'the expense.'

'Expense? But wouldn't it be false economy to study that when our health is concerned? Why, we don't know what suffering and disease we may escape by taking a little care.'

Well, the long and the short of it was that my wife was present at the lecture, while I remained by the fireside to thump out on my type-writer an article for the *Olympian Review*. I became so absorbed in this, that when a gust of cool air blew into the room, and my wife, with the usual outdoor smell that one notices in winter about her clothes, came in, it seemed but a few minutes since she had left me.

'Oh, George dear, I am so glad I saw that handbill. It's so *providential*; for if I hadn't gone to-night, goodness only knows what might have happened!'

'What on earth do you mean, love?'

My wife was too agitated to answer, but went into the next room and rang the bell for Pauline. As a matter of fact, Pauline's kitchen is almost as near as the next room, and she might have called her much more easily than by ringing the one perfect bell that we possess. But the principle of style was involved; and to that my wife is ready to sacrifice any amount of personal comfort.

Pauline, after repeated tinklings, 'came up smiling' from a novelette she had just been reading. Pauline is a good girl with a character, which Some Day I intend to work into a novel. But that, as Mr Kipling would probably say, is quite another story.

'Pauline,' said her mistress, 'take that meat away.' The table was already laid for supper, and I attempted a feeble protest against having my meal spirited away thus before my eyes. But my wife was determined, and said: 'Do you know, George, what the consequence of our eating meat may be? It's quite possible that we may go into consumption. Professor Spatling says that meat is a prolific cause of consumption, owing to the capacity of animals to contract that disease. The "basilica," or whatever you call those horrid little insects, get from the meat into our systems, and do the mischief. Jews are much freer from consumption than we are, solely owing to the fact that their food is always rigidly inspected by the rabbis before being used.'

'For human consumption,' I suggested jocularly. But my wife was very much in earnest.

'Then those pickles, too. Pickles are simply poisonous. Sulphate of copper is largely used in their manufacture, accounting for their bright green colours. You can give the beef and pickles to Mrs Friggs to-morrow, Pauline, to take home to the children.'

'My dear,' I ventured to suggest, 'if these are to disseminate the germs of consumption and to poison their recipients, do you think it quite the thing?'

I was going to say, 'to give them to our washerwoman; but a vision of mothers-in-law fitted across my brain, and I was about to suggest that her mother might be glad of them, when my wife continued: 'Then that bacon—everybody who eats bacon gets trichinosis. And you know you said yourself, George dear, that tomatoes brought on cancer.'

'But my love,' I ventured mildly to suggest, 'if we mayn't eat meat of any kind, or tomatoes, or pickles, what on earth is there left to live on?'

'Oh, heaps of things—eggs, fish, poultry, vegetables, everything almost. And I am sure it wouldn't be right to fly in the face of Providence after Professor Spatling's lecture.'

So for the next week we were living on eggs, vegetables, and fish; and by the time of the second lecture were rather longing for a change of diet.

Pauline had just laid our supper, oysters and sardines, eggs, pastry and cheese, when my wife returned, tearfully anxious.

'George, darling, do you—have you—are there any—any spots about you?'

I said I had no doubt I could oblige her, but could not tell with any certainty. But she was evidently severely serious.

'Please, don't joke, George dear; it's a matter of life or death. Do run up-stairs and see before it is too late.'

So finally, after useless protests, I was sent up to my bedroom with pencil and paper to report on the appearance and location of any 'spots' I might happen to possess.

'Oh, I'm so thankful,' said my wife when she was told that but for a few pimples that had existed long before the era of food lectures, my skin had a clean bill of health. 'I am glad that our folly has not, up to the present, had any serious consequences. Dr Hutchinson, the greatest surgeon in England, says Professor Spatling, has proved conclusively that leprosy is solely caused by eating too much fish; coast-districts are always the parts principally affected. Norway, the only European country where leprosy flourishes to any considerable extent, finds in fish its staple food. And oysters—oysters for supper! Good gracious, George, how could you be so foolish!'

'Pauline brought them in,' I explained feebly, and rather meanly. Of course, I had given Pauline the money.

'I suppose you don't really want to get rid of me, George? I suppose you haven't got them with the deliberate intention of giving me blood-poisoning or typhoid fever? Yet surely you ought to know that Thames oysters always— You haven't any pains about the—the breast, have you, George?'

When I had satisfied my wife on this point, she went over her notes of the lecture, and one by one knocked most of the principal articles off our bill of fare. To cut five lectures into one, week after week she did the same, terribly agitated about the ill effects resulting from this or that article of food, and in mortal fear lest, through our ignorance of the laws of healthy dietetics, typhoid or some other dire complaint should carry us off before the conclusion of the course of lectures.

'It is a comfort to have one's eyes open at last,' she said time after time, as this disease or that frightened her nearly out of her senses by being caused by some corresponding article of diet. After a while she began to take a melancholy interest in discovering fresh facts and arguments, showing some new association of eating and ill-health; and her time was principally spent in comparing the Cookery-book with the Dictionary of Diseases. Pastry was knocked off as bad for the digestion; sugar in any form produced diabetes; jam was simply turnip poisonously coloured; tinned provisions were notoriously dangerous; while any one with sense and a natural desire for good wind and breathing apparatus would avoid cheese like a pestilence. Then butter, according to a medical journal, was known to carry the germs of consumption; eggs were responsible for serious derangements of the liver, and fruit and vegetables meant cholera at the very least.

I bore up as best I could under these deprivations, thinking it wise to humour my wife while the fit lasted; and consoled myself in the mean-

time with the pipe and drinks that had not yet been taken away. But their day was at hand. A special lecture was devoted to these subjects; and immediately after, the corner of my mouth was violently seized and examined by my wife for signs of cancer; blindness was threatened unless tobacco was instantly relinquished; and as for drinks—well, with typhoid caused by milk, gout by beer, loss of nerve-power by tea and coffee, and fatty degeneration by cocoa, not to speak of indigestion and sundry other evils, a man would be criminal indeed to run such risk.

For the last week I have been living on bread-and-water and haricots, and even these were not obtained without a struggle. Haricots were conceded doubtfully, with a pensive statement that 'perhaps it might not do any harm, and haricots were certainly very nutritious;' so that since then, this white, fatty, insipid vegetable has made its way to the table in every conceivable form and on every conceivable occasion. Water, my wife thought, we should be better without; the Professor had said 'the less one drinks the better;' and it certainly follows that if one does not drink at all, a condition of perfect health is likely to be attained. With regard to bread, its properties are so fattening, that my wife, who has a slight tendency to 'embonpoint,' and whom I once discovered running surreptitiously up and down stairs with the object of reducing her weight, called upon me on those grounds to relinquish its use, reminding me that, as Byron used vinegar for this worthy object, so ought I to deny myself a little for the sake of health, economy, and above all, as a literary man, the preservation of a poetical and professional appearance. Here, however, I put my foot down, and she did not insist.

To-morrow is the last lecture, and then, after acting for a week or so the part of Succi or of Tanner, we shall probably resume our usual reckless habits. I ventured to remark just now to my wife that our bill of fare was assuming rather narrow limits, and that the morrow's lecture would probably deprive us of even our remaining food. She smiled assent, but then said encouragingly: 'How healthy it will be, though! How perfectly charming to know of one's immunity from disease!'

STARLIGHT.

Now when the day has quenched its lingering light,

The palpitating myriads of space

Throb, glow, and burn, that finite man may trace

The plan of the Almighty in the night.

A charm, begotten of the infinite,

Breathes o'er the listening land; the lone lake's face

Glistens with beauty as the heavens displace

Its native gloom and flood it with delight.

The woods stand tranced in stillness; one ripe leaf

Filters adown the sky through branches bare,

That hang the only witnesses of grief

For vanished summer and the days that were.

Save for the salmon's sudden splash, the stream

Glides still and songless in a magic dream.

THOMAS EDWARDS.

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A DESERTED VILLAGE.

FEW people have seen a Deserted Village. In all parts of England, alas! the old-fashioned rural life of which Goldsmith and Rogers sang is fast disappearing; and it is one of the saddest of facts that the growth of the manufacturing industries is being accompanied by a decay in farming and pasturage and the gradual depopulation of many a healthy village. But although most of us know villages whose life is being sapped by the commercial cupidity of overgrown towns, yet few can say that they have seen a *deserted* village—a forlorn gathering of empty, dilapidated cottages, with, perhaps, a ruined chapel and a roofless school-house.

But there is at least one deserted village in England. It stands on the summit of the Brendon Hills, in Western Somersetshire, twelve hundred feet above the sea-level, and overlooking one of the pleasantest tracts of country in all the west. From its untrodden roadside the tourist looks in one direction across a far-reaching, fertile valley, to the coffee-and-cream-coloured waters of the Bristol Channel. Another side of the prospect is bounded by the Quantock Hills, under whose shadow Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey found a temporary home, where they welcomed De Quincey, Hazlitt, Lamb, and other literary friends. 'It is a place,' exclaimed Coleridge, 'to make one forget the necessity of treason.' Within sight, also, is wild Exmoor, and other parts of the romantic stretch of country so graphically described by Mr Blackmore in *Lorna Doone*. In the midst of these charming surroundings slumbers our Deserted Village. The story of its rise and fall is soon told—and prosaic enough it is!

From time immemorial iron ore has been obtained on the Brendon Hills. We learn from the Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological Society that certain remains have been discovered there which prove that mines were worked by the Romans, and probably by other

rares in even earlier times. About thirty years ago a company was formed to work the Brendon mines, which were known to contain a large quantity of ore. A railway was constructed from the mines to the little seaport of Watchet, whence the mineral was shipped across the Bristol Channel to Swansea. It should be borne in mind that although the railway is but ten miles in length, the terminus at Brendon is twelve hundred feet above that at Watchet. The line is fairly level until it reaches the foot of the hills, when it climbs a tremendous gradient of one foot in four. Of course no locomotive could mount such an incline. The traction-power is supplied by a stationary engine on the summit.

Standing beside the engine-house, the spectator may obtain one of the finest views in the county. The little railroad runs, with mathematical straightness, down a ravine whose length and depth almost appal one, cut through the solid rock-foundation of a forest. Far away, at the bottom of the slope, is the little station at Coombe Row, which looks no larger than a draper's packing-case; and beyond is an immense tract of undulating woodland and heathland, bounded by an indistinct something, which we know to be the sea.

The works and buildings of the new company were very extensive, and, perched upon the highest point in the range of hills, could be seen for miles around. But the enterprise failed. The preparatory expenses had been great; the cost of railway carriage and shipment were very heavy indeed; and at the same time a heavy influx of Spanish iron set in. At any rate, the venture did not repay its promoters, and the company turned its attention to better-paying objects, leaving the newly-erected works to the mercy of the cruel blasts which sweep over this exposed spot. The hundred families of miners who had been attracted to the place speedily left it, and to-day their cottages stand in pitiful rows of dismantled masonry.

A visit to this Deserted Village is not soon

forgotten. The gaunt stone chimneys of the works, the numerous isolated sheds, the grass-grown railway terminus, and the rows of roofless cottages which line the roadside, have a peculiarly depressing aspect. The central building of the works is a ruined mass of stonework, and one can scarcely believe the testimony of the date which decorates the main shaft. It seems impossible that thirty years can have reduced a new building to such a state. One is able to believe, after seeing this, in the stories told of the devastating violence of the 'sou'wester' on these bleak hills. Of the many cottages on the higher and lower roads, about six are occupied; a few are used as stores by the cottagers; the remainder are in ruins.

At the junction of the roads, just outside the village, stands a quaint, square, plain building, over the porched entrance to which are the word 'Beulah' and the date of erection. This is the little chapel erected for the Nonconforming miners. No attempt has been made to preserve it from decay. The pedestrian may stroll in, on a bright afternoon, and find the sunlight streaming through the translucent windows and their borders of red and blue glass, making the interior grotesquely gay. The pulpit and the pews and part of the floor still remain; and not long ago many of the cards affixed to the book-rests, and inscribed with the seatholders' names, were yet to be seen.

About half a mile from this sadly-misnamed chapel is Raleigh's Cross Inn, a large rambling place, once a prosperous roadside hostelry. On a triangular green before the inn is the brown, moss-grown fragment of a pillar, resting on a half-sunken pedestal—all that remains of 'Raleigh's Cross.' The family of the celebrated Sir Walter Raleigh once owned the neighbouring estate of Nettlecombe, and it is said that the cross was erected by them, near its present position, to mark a dangerous bog. Sir Charles Trevelyan, however, has stated that the cross was the monument erected to the memory of his wife by Simon Raleigh, who fought for his country at Agincourt.

The visitor should not leave the Deserted Village until he has ridden on the Mineral Railway, along which two trains are run daily—for passenger traffic only, of course. The primitive condition and arrangements of the line will amuse him immensely. Above all, he should not miss the ride up or down the incline. When the train arrives at the foot of the hill, passengers for the summit are transferred to an uncomfortable truck, and drawn by the fixed engine to their elevated destination. The sensation during the ascent is a most peculiar one, and the passenger has to be careful lest he tumble headlong into the rear of his uncouth conveyance. But the discomfort of the ascent is thoroughly atoned for, not only by its novelty, but also by the

glorious breeze on the hill-top and the magnificent view, to say nothing of the melancholy satisfaction of having seen a really Deserted Village.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER X.—'THE ONLY WOMAN IN THE WORLD.'

WHEN about ten o'clock that night the great front-door of the house in Rutland Gate was swung open by the attendant footman to permit Miss Raynor to pass out, it was discovered that the weather was wet. It had been a cold day for June, with the wind from the north-east, and now the wind had shifted into the south-east, bringing a little warmer air laden with fine rain. Seeing that, Mr Raynor, who had accompanied his niece to the door—her other uncle was already become sedulous in the House of Commons—wished to send her to her lodgings in a cab, which the attendant footman professed a desire to call; but Miss Raynor insisted on going home afoot.

'I prefer to walk,' said she, 'and by myself, thank you, uncle. I shall not get wet: I am shamefully well protected from the rain, with both umbrella and mackintosh.'

So she had her way, and the door closed behind her. She had something of her uncle Suffield's habit of quoting to herself scraps from her reading—scraps which sounded more or less applicable to the occasion. As she departed from the house, holding her skirts as free of her heels as possible, she quoted with a low laugh to herself: 'Go, call a coach; and let a coach be called; And let the man that calleth be the caller.'

'Cab, miss,' said the driver of a loitering hansom, as she crossed to enter the Park by the Prince of Wales's Gate.

'No, thank you,' she cheerfully replied; and the cabman drew up his horse to see her disappear into the comparative darkness of the Park, and said to a comrade who had loitered up with another cab: 'P'raps she can afford a keb, and p'raps she can't. P'raps she's a lady, and p'raps she ain't nobody in particular. Anyhow, she's a fine young woman, and she 'adn't ought to be a-walkin' in the Park all alone by herself. 'Swelp me! If I 'adn't my keb I'd offer to scorch her myself.'

Isabel had quick ears. She overheard, but she was only amused; and she held on her way to the right. Her nearest route—and despite the dark and wet she saw no reason for diverging from it—was round the eastern end of the Serpentine, and thence directly to the Marble Arch. She had passed the Serpentine—thinking how like an enchanted lake it looked in that half-light that hung over London, and with the soft and velvety blackness of the trees that begirt it—and was stepping briskly along the narrow path that led to the great Archway, when a poor, meagre creature shuffling by suddenly snatched her umbrella from her easy hand and fled over the grass.

'The scoundrel!' exclaimed a man who almost

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as suddenly appeared before her and dashed after the thief. In a few seconds he was up with him, had caught him, and was leading him back to Isabel, himself carrying the recovered umbrella. The victorious stranger had led his captive but a few paces when he wrenched himself free and again fled over the grass. The stranger hesitated an instant whether he should again pursue him, but Isabel called: 'Please let him go!' and he returned, carefully carrying the closed umbrella as if it were of the most precious and fragile nature.

'Madam, permit me,' he said in a rich, genteel voice, which, though somewhat shaken and husky, had the exactitude and modulation of an elocutionist's. He put up the umbrella and handed it to her with a bow of great propriety.

In the dim light she could only see that the polite stranger had a very red and rather puffy face, that his ungloved hand trembled a good deal, and that his spare figure was closely buttoned in a frock-coat against the weather.

'Thank you very much,' said she, 'for your bravery and your kindness.'

'Madam,' said he with solemn deliberation, 'I can never bear to see a lady in distress.'

'Oh, but I was not at all in distress, thank you,' said she. 'If any one is in distress it must be that poor man, and he has lost his plunder after all.'

'He may have been a deserving man,' said he; 'but I need not remind you that appearances are frequently deceitful, madam. Meanwhile, may I accompany you to the broader, better-lighted, and more frequented thoroughfare: it is not wise—if you will permit me to say so—in a lady to perambulate these unfrequented paths alone.'

The man was polite, and seemed harmless, and she thought it would be sheer rudeness to refuse his request, especially since the broader thoroughfare was but a few yards off; so she assented by turning off in that direction. Walking by her side he seemed to halt a little and to lean hard upon his cane.

'I hope,' said she, 'you have not hurt yourself in running after that man?'

'No, madam,' he answered. 'It is only a touch of rheumatism that occasionally supervenes in such weather as the present. I have travelled the round earth over, and have passed through numerous hardships, but I never knew what rheumatism was until a year or two ago when I was camping out in the wilds of America.'

'The round earth over:' where had she heard that phrase? It sounded as if it had once been spoken in her ear. And the man's voice with its cadences and its superfluous fluency: did not that also sound familiar? But the frequented thoroughfare was now reached, and she stopped and signified that there they must part.

'I am exceedingly obliged to you,' said she, tempted a little to imitate his grandiloquence, 'for your polite attentions;' and she bowed, and was passing on.

'Madam,' said he, 'grant me a moment.'

'Yes?' said she.

'You are well protected against the weather, madam,' said he with a bow, doffing his hat—and then she saw he was partially bald, and that he had a moustache as fiercely and inconsequently

bristling, and over it a nose as fiery as Bardolph's own, while his dark eyes shone with a wandering but not unkindly light.

'Yes; I am,' said she.

'You perceive I am not;' and he showed the thin and frayed skirt of his frock-coat.

'I am sorry,' said she, 'that you are likely to spoil my opinion of you.'

'You cannot, madam,' said he, 'be sorrier than I. But I can conceive you are generous and sympathetic, and by no means prudish.'

'Well, what then? What do you wish of me?'

'Between ourselves, madam, I should like to achieve some refreshment. A bottle of Burgundy is excellent, but failing that a glass of Scotch whisky—with water—is not to be despised.'

Isabel found her pocket and her purse, and gave him a shilling.

'Madam,' said he, accepting it and again doffing his hat, 'you are the only woman in the world.'

'Thank you, sir,' said she, and turned and passed on her way.

She was pained and humiliated more than she could have believed possible. Could an educated gentleman really descend to so low and shameless a condition as that? And through what? Suddenly—she knew not at the moment quite why—she thought of her father. Considering all she had heard and guessed, was it within the range of possibility that he could become such a poor creature as that she had parted from? The phrase 'the round earth over' still hung in her ear, and the turn of the man's voice, and she remembered what they reminded her of—her father's last letter, or, at least, the last letter of the man who represented himself as her father. She was struck stock-still an instant, and then she ran back to where she had left the man, and still on; but she did not find him. She returned and passed out of the Park and home to her lodgings by Portman Square and Baker Street, with her thought cast forward to the meeting she had arranged for the following evening; would she then see the man she had encountered that night, or another?

She sat down to read to allay such thoughts, and she accomplished her end; but when she at length went to bed very late, and with her brain made wakeful by the effort of her reading, her ugly and anxious thoughts returned upon her with redoubled force. If her father were really such a one as that man, or perhaps that very one, what should she do? She asked herself—'What if she found he was that very man?'—and she was appalled and ashamed to think that no affection would spring in her heart towards him, and that she would rather he were dead. But her father might not be like the man she had met, or at least not so wretched a creature as he—and then—then she prayed God that she might learn what duty and love would teach. When at length she dropped asleep, she conversed with men with Bardolphian countenances, who all somehow were her uncles; and after a period of tangled discussion with them and uncertainty about the colour of their eyes, she would start awake, and again think of her father.

Next day passed with her usual duties; and in the evening, after she had gone through and marked a pile of her pupils' exercises—she had

been asked to go again to Rutland Gate, but she had excused herself—she set out to find Mrs Ackland Snow's, Tobacconist, near the New North Road. She had discovered that the last delivery of letters in that region, as in her own, began about nine o'clock, and by that hour she intended to be at the door of Mrs Ackland Snow. She had already looked at her map of London, and now she took the train to King's Cross, whence she rode by omnibus to her destination. It was scarcely dark, and she found without difficulty Nelson Street. It was a quiet street, of which she was glad, and it contained only such two- or three-storeyed houses as are peculiar to certain quarters of London, and as appear always striving, but without conspicuous success, to look genteel. Such houses are commonly found to be let in tenements and to swarm with children—the one possession in which the poor are rich. The aspect of the houses, however, cheered Isabel's heart a little; for she thought whoever lived there could not be absolutely sunk to the lowest ebb. She found the shop of 'Ackland Snow, Tobacconist;' but she did not enter at once: she walked slowly up and down on the other side of the way, waiting for the postman to appear; while boys and girls loitering along the pavement with the supper beer wondered why a veiled lady, tall and grand-looking as a duchess, should be 'hanging about' their street. Isabel was beginning to find such notice somewhat embarrassing, when her attention was fixed by the approach of the postman. After a rat-tat here and there, he went to 'Ackland Snow's.' A bell tinkled as he opened the door, which plainly signified that little business was done, and that there was not always a person in attendance in the shop. Isabel crossed the street to enter, but she was no earlier than a man who hurried along the pavement with the aid of a stick, and whom, with some amazement, but no difficulty, she recognised as the man she had met the evening before. Seeing him, she drew back a little, and let him enter first. She therefore neither hindered his question nor was too late to catch it.

'Has that letter come for us to-night, Mrs Snow?' he asked.

Mrs Snow, a stout and comfortable-seeming person, handed him a letter without a word, and at the same moment Isabel stepped forward and put up her veil. The man looked, and his jaw dropped. He turned, took off his hat, set it on the counter, and sat down in a chair with gloomy and tragic resignation.

'Mrs Snow,' said he, frowning and pursing his lips, 'I believe I have got them again!'

'Oh, dear—oh, dear!' said Mrs Snow in a soothing tone. 'Don't say that, Mr Doughty!'

'It grieves me to say it, Mrs Snow,' said he, folding his arms; 'but I believe I have!'

'Please, Mr Doughty, then,' said Mrs Snow, 'like a good man, which you are, don't go and 'ave 'em here.'

'Is your name "Doughty?"' asked Isabel: having heard the name twice, she was now pretty certain of its sound.

'She speaks!' he muttered aside, unfolding his arms and relaxing somewhat the ferocity of his aspect. 'It is—it must be she!' And he slowly turned his eyes on her, and rose. 'Madam,' said

he, 'I am the miserable individual baptismally named Alexander Doughty, at your service.'

'Let me ask you, then, Mr Doughty,' said Isabel, 'how it is I find you receiving a letter addressed to Mr Raynor?' And she pointed to the letter lying, face upward, on the counter.

'Mr Raynor is his friend, ma'am,' said Mrs Snow, 'as he fetches and carries for, and as he has been that kind to nobody knows!'

'A truce to compliments, Mrs Snow,' said Mr Doughty. 'You are trenching on my private affairs; you should not do it, Mrs Snow; you must not.' Then turning to Isabel, he said: 'I am a journalist, madam, and Mr Raynor is my chief.'

'I wish to see Mr Raynor,' said Isabel. 'Will you take me to him?'

'Your desire to see the chief, madam,' said Mr Doughty, 'is natural, and even laudable, but——' And Mr Doughty for once seemed at a loss for a word.

'You wonder,' said Isabel, 'why I should wish to see him: that letter to him is from me: I am Isabel Raynor.'

'Land of Goshen!' exclaimed Doughty. 'The only woman in the world is Miss Raynor, and I never guessed it!—Let us withdraw, Miss Raynor, and speak of this. I perceive an explanation is due to you.' Then as he approached the door he turned and said to her in a low voice: 'I must tell you he does not know of this.—Good-night, Mrs Snow,' he said aloud, as he held the door open.

Isabel passed out, and he followed her, buttoning up his frock-coat.

(To be continued.)

A BRAZILIAN CONVICT ISLAND.

THE island of Fernando Noronha, lying in the Atlantic Ocean, about two hundred miles from the north-east coast of Brazil, and three degrees south of the equator, is a fairly familiar landmark to English seamen. A large number of sailing-vessels sight it on their outward voyage to India and the colonies, running so far to the westward in order to make the most of the trade-winds. The majority of steamers, too, bound for either the east or west coast of South America pass within view of it on the outward and homeward journey. Few English ships, however, in either the naval or mercantile marine have ever called there; for the Brazilians, to whom it belongs, have made it a penal settlement, and being only a small island—some five and a half miles long by a mile and a quarter broad—it possesses no opening for trade. In 1827, when His Majesty's ship *Chanticleer* visited it, the inhabitants numbered only two hundred, and of these, sixty were the soldiers of the garrison. In 1832 Darwin, in the course of his voyage in the *Beagle*, spent a few hours there, but only gives a short notice of it from a naturalist's point of view. In 1871 H.M.S. *Bristol* paid a visit to the island, one result of which was a fresh Admiralty chart in 1872. In 1873 the *Challenger* anchored off the island in order to collect specimens of its fauna and flora; but having, unfortunately, neglected to obtain permission from the administrator of the

province of Pernambuco, within whose jurisdiction it lies, the Governor would not take upon himself the responsibility of authorising the collection being made. The convicts at that date numbered fourteen hundred, while there were one hundred and sixty soldiers in the garrison. Finally, in 1884, there is the account given by the officers of H.M.S. *Amethyst*, according to whom the number of the convicts had risen to two thousand two hundred and fifty, and of the soldiers to two hundred and fifty. Since that date there is no record of any English ship having visited the island, till the cable-laying steamer *Silvertown*, on board of which was the writer of this paper, anchored off there in September 1891.

The *Silvertown* was sounding along the proposed route of the cable which has just been laid from Pernambuco in Brazil to St Louis, Senegal, touching at Fernando de Noronha on the way; and it was, in consequence, necessary to go ashore there to make the requisite arrangements for its reception. Before noon, on the morning of the 18th of September, the island was sighted. As the ship approached from the south-west, sounding as she went, the curious peak, a thousand feet in height, and visible for thirty miles around, rose slowly up, like a huge column above the land, and from this direction appeared to be leaning slightly on one side. The island at a distance seemed perfectly barren, not a patch of green being anywhere apparent. Soon after four o'clock, the anchor was let go off the settlement on the northern shore of the island, and under a cliff, surmounted by a fort commanding the small bay where landing is effected. The gig was manned at once, and Mr M. H. Gray, the engineer in charge of the expedition, who had provided himself with the necessary papers from the Governor of Pernambuco, put off for the shore, accompanied by the captain and myself. It was a lovely afternoon, the heat of the day being tempered by the fresh south-east trade-winds. The principal buildings of the settlement, made of stone and whitewashed, stood out clear and distinct in the transparent atmosphere; but we looked in vain for the dense woods described by former visitors as clothing the island down to the water's edge; not a single tree was visible. Rounding the base of the steep fort cliff, a little cove opened out, and a group of men ashore beckoned to us to beach the boat where they were standing, for there was no landing-stage or pier of any kind to be seen. As we drew near this spot, three men on horseback came cantering down from the town, and dismounting, hastily directed those already assembled there—evidently convicts—to assist in beaching the boat, and then awaited our arrival bareheaded, in the courteous Brazilian manner. The boat was quickly run ashore, and after exchanging salutations with the three horsemen, the eldest of whom proved to be the second in command on the island, we began to ascend a pathway, made for the most part of rough stone steps and leading to the settlement.

A few remarks were exchanged in Portuguese; and then, half-way up the hill, a convict dressed in ordinary European attire, but with a sergeant's stripe on the arm of his holland jacket, made his appearance, hat in hand; and as soon as he spoke, it was evident that he was an Englishman, and had been summoned to act as interpreter

between us. He was the only English convict, we were told, on the island, and indeed the only European, with the exception of a German, who found his way there for forging paper money in Rio de Janeiro. The Englishman's crime was murder, having killed a Brazilian railway official. He was thin and worn, and his features bore traces of the suffering and hardship he had undergone in the early part of his imprisonment. Being informed of the reason for which he had been summoned, he accompanied us, still bare-headed beneath the rays of the tropical sun, up the hill; but his services were not often required, for the ascent was steep, and little breath was left for talking. At length we had climbed up to the settlement, and reaching the central square entered the Governor's house. Here we were ushered into the reception room, a somewhat bare-looking apartment, with a sofa on one side of it, and two rows of chairs running from either end down the centre of the room, and facing each other.

The Governor, a fine-looking man of about fifty years of age, soon made his appearance, and welcomed us courteously. Several of his staff, including the secretary, doctor, and three or four officers, accompanied him, and we were invited to sit down. The Governor's wife and two daughters, merry, dark-eyed young girls of about fourteen and fifteen years respectively, shortly joined us; and after their introduction, the discussion of business was commenced. The English convict, who had entered with us, stood behind the Governor, and conducted the interpretation, eliciting several merry peals of laughter from the young ladies by the mistakes he made in the discharge of his unaccustomed office, occasionally explaining a remark to the Governor in English and to us in Portuguese. The conference was soon concluded, for the points at issue were few, and then the Governor proposed to show us one of the prisons, while horses were being saddled to take us into the interior of the island.

Leading the way, he conducted us across the square formed by the Government offices, the chapel, storehouse, and workshop, till we reached the penitentiary—a large structure, with heavy doors, barred and bolted. The majority of the convicts, we were told, are allowed their personal freedom, living in huts made by themselves, while the prisons are reserved for unruly characters. The doors of the penitentiary were opened by a dark-skinned, half-caste warder, himself a convict—the best behaved are entrusted with such offices—and we passed under an archway leading to an inner court. In this archway, on the left-hand side, there was a heavy door, for which the jangling keys were again required, and we entered a chamber from which all light had been excluded. The warder, however, loosened and threw back a pair of iron shutters guarding a barred casement, and a solitary occupant was revealed, lying in a half-recumbent position on the stone floor in the centre of the chamber. The light seemed to bewilder him, and he looked from one to the other of us with a dazed expression. The prisoner was a well-made, almost pure-bred negro, apparently about forty years of age, with curly hair, sinewy neck, and a curiously puckered forehead, giving him a puzzled look, as if life had proved an unfathomable problem to him. When

we became accustomed to the light, we saw that he was secured, his right wrist and right ankle being shackled together in an iron frame chained to the bottom of a stake fixed firmly in the flooring, so as to leave him hardly any freedom of action. The Governor made a sign, and his manacles being undone, he was invited to move to the casement and enjoy the light of day. But his confined position had sadly cramped his muscles, and it was with some difficulty that he dragged himself to the barred window. Here he took a seat on a rough grass mat he carried with him, and proceeded to watch us with a vacant curiosity, while every now and then his frame was shaken with a racking cough, for the wind blows strong and almost chilly towards sunset in this ocean island, and he was scantily clad. The Governor drew our attention to several rude sketches scratched on the wall, representing daggers, knives, and such-like murderous instruments. These were the prisoner's handiwork. It appeared that he was subject to fits of madness, during which, unless pinioned, he was dangerous to himself as well as to his warders. As soon as he recovered, he would be set at liberty again to work in the fields. He had lately been thus engaged when one of his fits seized him, and he had all but murdered a fellow-convict; hence the necessity of the shackles with which we found him secured.

On the other side of the archway we were shown into a large ward, with a row of cells built down one side of it. These were reserved for the most refractory characters. The warder opened the door of one of them, which proved to be completely dark, and very little more than six feet high by three feet wide. The Governor called on its occupant, who was invisible, to make his appearance; and after a short interval, a fine negro at least six feet high stepped sullenly out. He was magnificently made, his figure being displayed to full advantage by a scanty waistcloth. Unarmed though he was, he looked as if he could overpower half-a-dozen men of like build to his warder. He had always been a most troublesome prisoner, we were told, and could only be reduced to submission by two or three days' solitary confinement in a dark cell. After a few questions had been addressed to him, which he answered in sulkily monosyllables, he was allowed to withdraw; and we passed on through the other portions of the building containing the less serious offenders, till we entered the square again.

Here we found some six or seven hundred convicts, drawn up in as many columns, to attend roll-call and a short evening service. The roll-call had been read, and the prisoners were now singing an evening hymn. It was a striking scene, and one to which the time and place lent a certain impressiveness. Men of all ages, some with gray hair, some in the full flush of youth, were to be seen in the convict ranks. The majority were dark-complexioned, with a large preponderance of the negro element, for the lower Brazilian classes have intermingled a good deal with the native Africans originally imported into their country as slaves. Their dress consisted of old and faded European clothes, or soiled and tattered cotton garments, worn in native fashion. The hymn which they were singing with the African's nasal

and metallic intonation, struck the ear like a plaintive dirge raised by a band of men marooned upon a silent and deserted ocean island. At the conclusion of the hymn, the whole company knelt down while the priest pronounced a short blessing, and then the convicts were dismissed to their habitations.

On returning to the Governor's house, we found the horses ready saddled, and started off, a party of twelve, to visit another prison two miles inland. The sun had sunk by the time we reached the prison, a low, one-storeyed building, erected on the top of some rising ground in the centre of the island. Dismounting, we were conducted through the outer door under an archway into the courtyard beyond. On the left-hand side of this courtyard, the windows—mere barred casements without glass—of an ill-lighted ward were visible, and from them proceeded the confused noise of high-pitched voices. These, however, were suddenly hushed as the door leading into the ward was opened and the Governor entered. We followed him, and found ourselves in a long chamber, the darkness of which seemed to be rendered only more apparent by two or three ill-burning oil lamps suspended from the ceiling. Most of the occupants were gathered at a table running down the centre; but several were stretched on rude constructions on either side, serving the purpose of beds. All were silent, and regarded us with listless curiosity.

'Where is Pedro?' asked the Governor. Pedro, we were informed, was one of the worst characters on the island. He had been banished there for a peculiarly brutal murder, having tied his wife up in a sack and stabbed at her through the material with a large knife till she expired. Since his arrival at Fernando Noronha, he had killed two of his fellow-convicts.

We were curious to catch sight of so incorrigible a malefactor, and expected to see him dragged from a solitary cell, bound hand and foot. Presently, however, a man perfectly unfettered, about fifty years of age, somewhat under medium stature, with stooping shoulders and grizzled hair, made his appearance, and we were told that this was the notorious criminal. When he had come to a halt in front of us, he smiled somewhat fatuously, and blinked with his bleary eyes. He was of negro origin, and suffering from the weak sight often observable in his race in later years. In response to one or two remarks addressed to him by the Governor, he smirked, as if he felt he was a credit to the settlement, but disclaimed such public recognition of his merits, and then he was dismissed; and after a short inspection of the rest of the building, we returned to the stone-paved terrace in front of the prison. Here, in the light of the full moon which had just risen above the hills to the east, we sat down on some benches brought out for us, and were served with cocoa-nuts freshly gathered from a neighbouring palm.

On our way back I learned something of the penal settlement and the management of its inhabitants. The trees, I was told, which, as late as the visit of H.M.S. *Amethyst* in 1884, covered nearly the whole island, had been cut down within the last few years, partly to leave more ground clear for cultivation, and partly to withdraw from the convicts the means of making boats in which to escape. With the exception of some

cocoa-nut groves, which were carefully tended, only isolated bunches of trees were now left standing. This wholesale denudation has produced some marked effects, beneficial and the reverse. On the one hand, the ground reclaimed has proved so fertile that the island is able not only to produce enough to support all its inhabitants, but also to grow castor and cotton plants in large quantities for exportation. Maize, beans, cassava, sweet-potatoes, bananas, melons, and sugar-cane thrive equally well on the rich soil. With the clearance of the timber has also disappeared an obnoxious stinging plant which overran the island, and produced a very painful irritation in those who touched it, lasting three or four days in great intensity. On the other hand, the picturesqueness of the scenery has been destroyed, and the reddish-brown doves which swarmed in the woods have suffered a large diminution in their numbers. More serious is the lessened rainfall owing to the absence of trees; and to such an extent has it decreased, that the chances of a severe drought are becoming every year more probable. In the wet season, though it may be raining all round the island, the storm frequently passes away without shedding one drop of moisture on it.

At the time of our visit there were eighteen hundred convicts in the settlement. Of these, one thousand are divided into ten companies of a hundred each, under the command of a sergeant, himself a convict. They live in outlying villages, and are employed at work in the fields and plantations, and tend the sheep and cattle. The rest live in the town, and are engaged at different handicrafts in the workshop, or fish in catamarans, the native Brazilian canoe, too roughly built to attempt to escape in, being merely two or three logs bound together and propelled by sail or paddle. All have to work for their food and clothing, which they obtain from the Government stores in proportion to the work performed. Some of the convicts themselves are allowed to keep private stores, where their fellows may purchase any little extras they require beyond the bare necessities of life. Convicts of good behaviour are allowed to have their wives on the island, should they be willing to come. There are two schools, one for the children of officers and soldiers, and one for the children of convicts; the masters in both cases are convicts. At the age of twelve, the sons of convicts are sent to a military school at Pernambuco. The girls are allowed to stay on the island with their parents, if they wish to do so. To maintain order among these eighteen hundred prisoners, there were at the time of our visit only sixty soldiers in garrison. Little difficulty, however, is experienced in their management, punishment for ill behaviour being detention in the penitentiary, flogging, or, in extreme cases, banishment to Rat Island, a small uninhabited island about a mile long at the north-east of Fernando, where its occupant would have to keep himself alive by fishing.

When we re-entered the town and had rested for a short time on the terrace in front of the Governor's house—his hospitable invitation to supper was unavoidably declined—we took our leave, and set off for the beach. The English convict, who seemed to have complete personal liberty, accompanied us down to the water, and

talked with me on the way as to the chances of his obtaining pardon and release.

We gained the beach, and thanking him for his escort, bade him good-bye, entered our boat, and pushed off from the shore. As we were carried over the heaving waters, glistening in the clear light of the full moon, we could see him standing motionless on the spot where we had left him, dreaming, no doubt, of the day for which he longed, when he would get his pardon, and row off to the ship which was to restore him to life and liberty. The best that we can wish him is that nothing will ever occur to rob him of the illusion which alone makes existence supportable to him.

'THE HINT O' HAIRST.'

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

Willie's fair and Willie's rare!
And Willie's wondrous bonnie,
And Willie's hecht to marry me,
Gin e'er he marries ony!

How the little verse had stayed with him during all his comings and goings in poor stifled London! When he drove from his hotel to his lawyer's the hansom cab wheels played the time, and he found himself, in the middle of Piccadilly, that never thins or slacks for any reason but only congests more and more, singing the pretty words, and thinking of the sweet bird-like voice that had sung them with so modest a boldness by the Erne's running river, where was a sound at spate-time that gave hints of Piccadilly. That merle of his!—He was always thinking of her; when should he see her? what should they say to one another?

He loved, and had always loved, every bird that sang in Ardlach woods, and it was only a case of loving more, of loving quite differently this one bird that was his, and that would flute for him only.

Willie Gordon had the strong vein of sentiment that distinguishes his countrymen the world over—that is heard in their music, that speaks in their poetry, that is buried in their hearts. There was something in his love, a quality very subtle and strange, that can only grow in the soul of a true Scot—that is travestied merely in the sentimentality of a German.

He was in London still, going about this difficult business, thinking of his sweet Scotch lassie, when a telegram reached him: 'John very ill. Come at once.—ROSE.' It had been at his hotel for hours, and they had not known how to catch him, or when he would be in to get it. Willie only stopped to put a few letters and small matters in his pocket, while the hall porter looked out the first train. He had three-quarters of an hour to catch it, and he went up-stairs and packed his portmanteau in a leisurely way, sorely troubled all the time.

In an hour he was being whirled northward on the North-western line, pondering and wondering what news would await him at Edinburgh, where Rose would surely have another telegram waiting for him: at their first stoppage he sent her a wire to this effect, for there was always a delay in Edinburgh before getting into the

Inverness train, and he would have time to run up to his club.

The last letter from Foresk, a few days ago, had told him that John was worse, was in bed indeed, and that the Inverness doctor who reinforced Dr Herries on occasion had come over more than once. This, however, had often happened before. Ever since John had come home they had been subject to alarms of the same kind, when, for a few weeks, the attack might at any moment take a serious turn. Willie was therefore not over-anxious, and now and then allowed his mind to recur to thoughts of Aveline, whom he always pictured singing in the woods by the Erne. He had never seen her in a house; he wondered how she would look sitting by a table with the lamplight falling across her hands and hair—sewing, perhaps, or just calmly reading, with the eyelids slanted over the dark gray eyes.

On the whole, it was not altogether a painful journey; nothing in the world would ever be so painful again as it had been before. Had he not always now a fair beacon-light to rest his eyes on? some one thing in his life that would always be beautiful, always be cheery, inspiring, and comforting? The whole tide of his being set towards Aveline Lockhart: if ever there was a faithful, unerring, unwavering love in this world, it was Willie Gordon's.

He arrived in Edinburgh and walked up to his club; yes, there was a telegram for him—it was a long one.

It told him that his brother was dead.

Willie sat down heavily in the Club library with the two sheets in his hand; at this difficult moment he had no consciousness of his own feelings; it was quite mechanical on his part when he got up and walked into the autumn brilliance of Princes Street. Two or three men he knew recognised him and nodded to him; but Willie never saw them, though he saw very dimly the great Castle rising out of a morning mist that lent a dimness and unreality to the bases of its rocks. He was only just in time for his train.

He threw himself back in the corner of his compartment, and made the journey gravely, facing and controlling the strong feeling that overcame him.

He had not loved his brother, and he had been forced to disapprove fatally of him. He could have admitted that it was a good thing for every one that a life which was not only useless but hurtful should be ended—a burden to himself, a sorer burden to others; but none of these admissions, reasonable though they were, had anything to do with the deep feeling—which is family feeling, and is nowhere more at home than in Scottish blood—that filled him in the first presence of his loss.

Now, indeed, his woodland merle could not sing to him! All personal troubles would melt before the music of her voice; the world's woes would recede to a distance at which they would be both bearable and picturesque; but this grief, dark, undefined, but potent, lying in the depths of his being, coursing in his veins—with this Willie Gordon retired within himself, neither suffering nor thinking much, but just watching alone beside it.

In the silent greeting between him and Rose, in the kiss and warm embrace he gave his mother, was his whole strong heart surging up in him. Rose Gordon looked only straighter and paler and sterner than in her frequent strenuous moods; but even she had been shaken to a wondering sort of fear and sorrow at the moment of John's death. This had passed very quickly, and when Willie saw her she was again that slim, clear-eyed figure of Justice, with small leanings to Mercy, to which he was accustomed.

It was for his mother that Willie felt: all the way driving to the house, and often in the train, he had been wondering how the poor gentle woman would bear herself. The disappointment in her favourite boy was an old story now; but, at his death, all the brightness of his promise, all the pride of earlier days, would rise up in her mind and serve to emphasise the impression of his futility. Why are such men born as John Gordon? Perhaps to break the hearts of the women who love them.

Willie spent most of the evening after his arrival sitting with his mother in her own room and stroking her hands. They scarcely said a word, these two; and from an adjoining room came the sound of Rose's pen as she wrote letters and cards to the immense family circle.

By the morning, when he was called on to attend to much business, Willie had resumed his simple, every-day demeanour; he had looked at and accepted the situation, and, though he said nothing about it, he had found a measure for his sorrow.

He was already accustomed to the 'Sir William' which the servants and dependents had at once, with the mobility of their kind, endured him. Next day, when the warm afternoon, spent in letter-writing, had waned, he and Kate went out together to the Erne side, not exactly because he hoped to meet Aveline, but because he wanted to be quiet and to think. Bowers had dropped a hint of fever present in the village; and Dr Herries had said that there was a complication in the nature of Sir John's last illness which suggested he had not escaped from infection by the disease that was hovering in the air. This had to be reflected on. If it were so, it proved that God had not forgotten His world: that terrible Judaic justice was still meted out where it was due.

The end of autumn—the 'hint o' hairst'—was a dangerous season; only the year before, Rose had suffered from a sort of low fever, which was very unaccountable, but which, Dr Herries had not seen fit to mention, bore a resemblance to the illness that laid up one or two of the villagers.

The finger had been laid lightly on innocent Rose; but upon John, clothed with the sins of his selfishness, God's whole hand had been laid.

With the faint sweet scents of the woodland all about him, Willie analysed these thoughts one after another; but having looked at them, he saw they were not good to dwell on. Then the beauty and the mystery of Nature stole in upon his mind; the light chill in the timorous wind that played so tenderly among the brittle leaves refreshed him and cheered him. He watched the uneasy swallows, which a single cold

day would cause to gather about the big elms near Foresk South Lodge, piping their shrill roll-call among the branches, and shaking down the last of their golden store.

There was that other song of Aveline's that came to him somehow: what was it?

It's dowie in the hint o' hairst
At the wa'gang o' the swallow,
When the wind grows cauld, and the burns grow
bauld,
And the woods are hingin' yellow.

Well, that was this afternoon!—Only the winds would be colder still before the swallows went; Erne would come raging through his rocky channel with the volume of all the mountain and moorland burns in his arms, and the first violence of his winter temper in his stream.

Willie sat on the stone where last time she had been beside him, and the threads of his life began to look as though they might be woven into a bright piece some day; so fleet is time, so quickly does it hurry over crises, or rather, so much living does it crowd into those dull, dreich days which follow them, that the future takes shape out of the broken fragments of our lives, and dark veils taken from our eyes leave a clearer vision.

To-morrow, he would follow his brother to the grave, and listen to the service that he had last heard at his father's death.

Then he would have to enmesh himself in the difficult business that surrounds the succession to an estate, and in his case it would be doubly complicated. He would have a life as busy and as full as it had once been idle; he would devote himself to the tenants; they were *his* tenants now; cut down the expenses at Foresk in such a manner as not to affect his mother and sister; and wisely employ what money he could lay hands on for the immediate improvements required in the village. Among other things, he would be engaged to Aveline, openly, publicly, proudly. He was quite sensible enough to feel that after the constraint and difficulty, the tedium and repression of his earlier years, this liberty and freedom that was coming to him was quite deserved.

He sat, patting his dog and talking to her, sometimes smiling even, as visions of his future showed themselves to him—the future for which he was so ready to use his best strength to make bright for himself and others.

It would be a sweet and lovely home when Aveline, his mother, and Rose—all of whom loved him so—lived at Foresk in the fullness of peace and human-kindness. Their hearts would not then be wrung with tales of suffering they had no means to appease.

In the quiet talk he and his mother had had together the night before, when a subdued sorrow and a timid, just born peace had been apparent in Lady Gordon's manner, Willie had shadowed out the idea very diffidently, and had stolen two or three careful glances at her face: it was a new thing for Willie to be nervous, but when we are making a half-confidence, one eye must always be open to see that our friend's mind has not filled in the other half from imagination.

Lady Gordon had no idea who Willie could be referring to in this visionary, halting conversation, and, in pondering it over afterwards with

Rose, decided that he had been speaking generally, and that, as yet, he had not seen the girl he would care to make his wife. Indeed, as Rose said in her practical way, where could he have seen her?

And there Willie sat, thinking over the new future, the new hopes, and reflecting upon the old troubles, now passing away; there was no doubt he would be a good landlord, no doubt that his tenants and his estate would be his first care; and as a rider to every suggestion of his mind came the silver finish of his love for Aveline.

In all that scene he saw her, and his eyes rested on the opposite bank, where her gaze had so often strayed; he saw no more pink scabious, not a flower at all, but just the dry gold leaves hurrying over each dead stem and the decaying calyx. The beech-trees had spread a red carpet underneath their branches, and the elms had laid their shadow court with cloth of gold.

In a few days he would meet her here, and have his first long, uninterrupted talk with her. To Willie Gordon this new confidence between himself and his heart's love would be something more fresh and precious than a May-dewdrop in a daisy's eye—it would be something as rarely held in the hand of a man.

Under the influence of this hope he got off the stone, and Kate followed him through the woods, making the passage over the Lover's Leap as usual beneath her master's arm.

Half way up the hill-slope Willie paused; he and the Foresk woods were in the shadow of their own hills, but the sun, coming through a dip, gleamed on the fire of the rowan clusters on the Ardlach side of the river and threw handfuls of red gold into the windows of the Manse: somewhere, perhaps touched by that last sunshine, she was, and there was no one on whom the sun did so well to linger.

When he turned to go on his way, he saw Rose coming towards him.

'I wanted to meet you,' she said; 'I had something to say.'

She turned and walked with him; already she had on a black gown of some sort. After a moment she stopped, and he followed her example; the path was narrow, and each leaned against a tree facing the other; Kate, a little in advance, turned her black head to see if they were coming on, and showed the rose-pink of her mouth and the brilliant glister of her teeth.

'Willie,' Rose began, in some little difficulty, 'I am sure you have not heard that John had—had caught the fever that is in the village?'

'I have,' said Willie gravely.

'And do you know all about it? Did Jeffreys tell you how it chanced?'

'No; Herries only hinted it, and—I did not question him. Where was the use?'

A little pause fell.

'I think you ought to know,' Rose said slowly. 'There have been several deaths in the village lately, of children especially. Miss Lockhart used to take great interest in the people, and nursed many of them. I always knew that, and liked it in her. One day, when mother and I were out calling, she determined herself to appeal to John. She had no idea what was the matter

with the children; she only knew that the unhealthiness of their houses was killing them. She came straight from the deathbed of a little child to Foresk, and asked for John. He saw her; she was there a long time—at least over half an hour; Jeffreys saw her of course, and heard about it, but—John told me. He caught the infection from her, we think.'

Rose's voice had sunk very low, and her eyes were fixed on her brother; it was as though she wanted him to appreciate the terrible justice of Sir John's death without her mention of it.

There was a long pause, and then Willie, whose mind had indeed grasped this light upon the subject, but who was engaged in dreaming of Aveline's gentle courage, said, more with the air of saying something than because he was interested in it: 'Of course one has heard of that—some one carrying infection in their clothes and passing it on to another, who'—

'But you know the poor girl is dead too?' said Rose with simple tenderness, and looking sad for the fate that had overtaken her; 'that is so terrible, isn't it?'

'She'—

'Yes, poor thing! She died—I think four days ago. It is very terrible,' looking blankly through the woodland; 'it'—

She said no more, for her brother swayed round heavily against the tree trunk, put up his arms, and buried his face in them.

'Willie!'—She started forward and put a hand on his sleeve. He said nothing; but when she continued to question him he motioned her to go away; and after a little, very perplexed and puzzled, she went.

There is nothing more to say about Willie Gordon. The winds grew colder through the woodland, the autumn mists wound their shrouds around the hills, and the swallows twittered and gathered closer in the big elm-tree where their meeting was every year.

He was alone in the 'hint o' hairst,' and it was nearly the 'wa'gang o' the swallow;' but the lines of the old song that Willie had never remembered wailed through the woodlands now:

But oh, it's dowie far to see
The wa'gang o' her the heart gangs wi',
The dead-set o' a shinin' e'e
That darkens the weary world on thee.

He had met the tragedy of his youth through another's sinning; he had had one hope for a little, and then it had been taken.

Truly, his love had been one of those things that 'come and gae,' and who would watch the pink scabions by Erne's bank next year? *His flower, his love, the sun that had shone out over his life for a few days—dead, buried, out of sight of his eyes, deaf to his voice, where his hands could never reach her, however they might yearn.*

That a Nemesis should have overtaken his brother—that was justice: that he should have died of the very scourge he had prepared for others—that was justice, bare, awesome, not to be questioned or entreated; but that Aveline should have been the means, the instrument in the hand of Fate, for Fate to use and throw away, and that he, Willie, should be the life-long mourner—what was that?

When he was able to think of it, his revolt

against the seeming injustice of this world filled all his soul; but he did not think so till later, and it is as well not to follow him in that mood. Better to leave him in the dim early autumn night, alone in the great woods, with only his dog beside him; to leave him leaning half-lifelessly against a tree-trunk, the rough fine pattern of the crisp lichens impressed upon a cheek that was wet with the first tears his manhood had ever known.

THE END.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

BIMETALLIC wire is coming into use for telephonic and various other electrical purposes, and is said to possess in many situations great advantages. For instance, a compound wire consisting of a cast-steel core with an outside layer of copper, has been found most serviceable for telegraphic work along the sea-coast or in any places where there is constant exposure to fog and damp. The two metals adhere to one another perfectly, and there is no tendency to peeling or separation even when the wire is much bent about. Another compound wire which is highly spoken of as possessing unusual tensile strength and low electrical resistance, has an aluminium bronze core contained in an outer covering of copper bronze.

The United States consul at Singapore has recently made an interesting Report on the development of tea-cultivation by the Sultan of Johore (Malay Peninsula). Tea, like coffee and pepper, is not indigenous to the soil; but its growth has been rapid, and the flavour of the product is delicious. The tea-gardens on the Sultan's territory have an area of eight hundred acres, and they are cultivated by Chinese, Javanese, and Malayan labourers, the most rapid and skilful pickers being women and children. After the leaves are picked, they are sprinkled over bamboo trays, and are placed under cover in the upper floor of the factory until they are withered. They are then put, in charges of fifty pounds at a time, into a rolling box, when the leaves are pressed, twisted, and rolled without any loss of juice. Next, after giving a short time for fermentation, the leaves are placed in the 'sirocco,' which consists of an iron chest, over a furnace, which is kept at two hundred and sixty degrees Fahrenheit. This chest has four trays at different levels, and the charge of tea is put in first at the highest level for a few minutes, then turned over by hand and put lower down, and so on until it has been subjected to the four different degrees of heat. It is then 'made-tea,' after which it is sorted into grades by a machine which has sieves of different degrees of fineness, packed up, and placed upon the market. Specimens of this Johore tea will be sent by the consul to the Chicago Exhibition.

Boughton's 'Telephotos' is a contrivance for day or night signalling which has recently been described and illustrated in *The Scientific American*. It may be briefly described as consisting of a keyboard arrangement in connection with a signal staff nearly thirty feet long, which is furnished

throughout its length with more than one hundred incandescent lamps of thirty-two candle power. By manipulation of the keys these lamps may be illuminated in sections, so as to form the various combinations of the Morse dot and dash alphabet. It is obvious that the arrangement is only applicable where a dynamo and engine are available.

The great tower now being built at the Chicago Exhibition will not have much resemblance to its prototype at Paris, save that it will be made entirely of steel. It will have a height of five hundred and sixty feet, which is about one-third less than the Eiffel Tower, but it will have no lifts. Around it, from top to bottom, will be a winding spiral railway, measuring about one mile in actual length, with two lines of rail, one for the ascent and the other for the return. This railway will be worked by electricity, and there will be a number of cars, each lighted by six incandescent lamps. At the top of the tower will be an observatory with a cluster of search-lights. The cost of the erection is estimated at more than three hundred thousand pounds, and the promoters hope not only to make it pay but to reap a large profit.

The threatened revival of crinoline, about which we have heard so much lately, is a matter of far more importance to commerce than would at first seem evident. When the fashion last became prevalent about thirty years ago, many fortunes are said to have been made in the hoop-iron industry, owing to the demand for those ribbons of metal which were required before the human form could be deformed in the manner which fashion dictated. The most rational arguments against the revival are its thoroughly inartistic character, and the death-trap which it represents in juxtaposition with open fireplaces.

On the Great Northern Railway a new method of signalling to the driver of a train in motion has recently been tried. The semaphore, of small size, is on the engine itself immediately before the driver's eyes. Electrical contact is secured by a brush fixed on the engine, which rubs against a wire or rail on the track. We believe that contrivances of a somewhat similar kind have been suggested in past times, but have not been found of practical value. This device may happily prove an exception.

If every house does not possess its proverbial skeleton, it certainly has one or more chimneys which produce a steady down-draught when the wind happens to be in a certain direction. The Champion Chimney-pot, invented by Mr W. Peyton, seems well adapted from its construction to cure the evil. It consists of a tube, near the top of which are a number of inverted trumpet-shaped openings, so that, in whatever direction the wind may be blowing, some of these openings must receive it, and cause an upward draught in the chimney which they surround. The contrivance has no loose or moving parts, and can be as easily cleaned as a chimney of the ordinary pattern.

The establishment of an Observatory on the summit of Mont Blanc, after being discussed for some years, will soon be an accomplished fact. The accumulation of hardened snow on the site chosen is so deep that it was quite impossible to found the building on the solid rock. It

has therefore been determined to dig its foundations in the snow itself. The materials for this erection, which are mostly of wood, are now being carried piecemeal up the mountain, and two huts for the shelter of the workmen employed, one at the Grands Mulets, and another at the Grand Rocher Rouge, have been built.

A useful suggestion with regard to the application of the common typewriting machine to correspondence in cipher has been made by a M. Erve in one of the French newspapers. He points out that a favourite and simple method of cipher-writing has for a long time consisted in the substitution of certain letters of the alphabet for others, so that, for instance, A shall be represented by C, B will stand for R, and so on. Working on this principle, the types on a machine could be so transposed that the operator would have no difficulty whatever in writing a letter which would apparently be a confused jumble of characters. But his correspondent would copy the letter with a machine which had been rearranged in a similar manner, when the letters would retranspose themselves automatically, and the original writer's meaning would become plainly set forth. The idea is an ingenious one, and will doubtless commend itself to many business men.

It is interesting to note that the revised Patent Act, which came into operation on January 1, 1884, has had the effect of increasing the number of applications for patents fourfold. In the year 1883, when the old Act was in force, the number of applications amounted to close upon six thousand. In the year which has just drawn to a close they were 24,166. These figures show that the easier terms upon which a patent can now be obtained have been productive of good results; but we are still far behind the American Patent Office, in which the fees charged are so small that inventors receive far greater encouragement to patent their ideas.

M. Chaveau lately brought before the French Academy a curious experiment with regard to the appreciation of colour. He points out that if a person go to sleep near a window in such a position that the reflected light from white clouds falls equally on both eyes, he will on awakening have the impression for a short period that the room and all its belongings are bathed in green light. As the phenomenon is only observable after awakening from profound slumber, it is presumed that there are distinct nerve-centres for green, as well as for the other primary colour sensations, red and violet, and that the green first regain activity after sleep.

The loss of life by snake-bite in India alone reaches every year some thousands of cases, and although we occasionally hear of remedies which are said to be effectual, the death-rate continues without diminution. We are glad to note, however, that at last something is to be done with a view to check this terrible mortality. A Snake Laboratory, the only institution of its kind in the world, is to be established at Calcutta, and will soon be in full working order. At this institution the principal work done will be the investigation of the properties of snake-poison and the examination and testing of so-called cures. It is interesting to note that the cost of this Snake Laboratory has been partially provided for by a

Bengali gentleman, who has contributed towards the expenses fifteen thousand rupees.

In an interesting paper read before the Society of Arts by Mr B. H. Brough on the Mining Industries of South Africa as shown at the Kimberley Exhibition, diamond-mining is very fully dealt with. It is stated that, comparing all available sources of information, the Cape Colony has exported, since the first discovery of diamonds in South Africa in 1867, more than fifty million carats of the precious stone, representing a value of nearly seventy million pounds sterling. This enormous quantity would weigh more than ten tons, and if piled in a heap would form a pyramid six feet high, with a base nine feet square.

To a recent number of the *Annals of Scottish Natural History*, Colonel Duthie contributes an interesting paper on the needless destruction of wild-birds' eggs, and egg-collecting generally. He divides certain collectors into three classes—namely, the aimless, the greedy, and the mercenary, and contrasts them with the true collector, who is a naturalist collecting eggs as a means of acquiring knowledge. Workers of this latter type should, he asserts, do their own collecting, and should not receive eggs into their cabinets unless authenticated by some one whom they can trust. If this were done, egg-collecting as a trade, with its concomitant abuses, would disappear.

An idea has gained currency during the past few years that the tomato as an article of diet is liable to produce or encourage the terrible disease of cancer, and not long ago it was also stated that the use of this vegetable had been forbidden at the Cancer Hospital. So widely spread has this notion become, that Dr Marsden, chairman of the Medical Committee of the Cancer Hospital, London, has thought it advisable to give it official contradiction. He says that his Committee have been inundated with letters on this subject, and he begs publication for the following statement, which we hope will settle the matter once for all. It is the opinion of the Committee 'that tomatoes neither predispose to nor excite cancer formation, and that they are not injurious to those suffering from this disease, but, on the contrary, are a very wholesome article of diet, particularly so if cooked.'

The scheme by which the vast energy of the Falls of Niagara is to be utilised by the employment of huge dynamo-machines has its counterpart on this side of the Atlantic. Mr B. H. Thwaite proposes to distribute power over the chief English manufacturing areas by burning coal at the pit-mouth, where it is comparatively cheap, and turning it into electricity in the form of high-pressure alternating currents. In this way he would from one station supply the whole of Lancashire and the Ship Canal with energy; from another would be supplied Yorkshire; while a third would serve the Midlands and London.

Boise City, Idaho, is about to make use of the hot-water springs in its neighbourhood for heating purposes. The water will be conveyed to the city, distant from the springs but one mile, by means of pipes, and will be associated with heaters of various forms placed in the houses and public buildings. It is anticipated that the cost to consumers will be about one-half that of heat derived from coal. The enterprise, unfortunately, cannot be imitated by many other towns, for there are

few which have such natural conveniences close to their walls.

A skating rink having a surface of real ice, which is renewed every day, has recently been installed at Paris with the greatest success. The flooring is covered with a series of pipes having a total length of five thousand metres, but placed in parallel lines almost touching one another. Through these pipes there circulates an unceasing solution of chloride of calcium, which is cooled previously to any extent required by the evaporation of ammonia. This pipe-flooring is covered with water, which is very quickly brought to the solid condition. It is proposed to keep this skating rink open all the year round.

In a recent Report by the engineer of the Channel Tunnel Company on the search for coal which has been made near Dover, it is stated that the borings now reach a depth of 2228 feet, and that nine workable seams have been found, containing in the aggregate twenty feet in thickness of good bituminous coal, suitable for gas-making or household purposes.

A tricycle which can be worked indifferently on land or water has lately formed the subject of an American patent. The vehicle has the framework of an ordinary tricycle, but hung between its two larger wheels is a twin-boat, between the prows of which the small front wheel revolves. The larger wheels have blades fixed to their spokes, so that they act as paddle-wheels when the rider leaves *terra firma* and takes to the water. The weight of the machine is about seventy pounds, and it will carry two persons on land, or will support three or more in the water. From this latter circumstance we gather that the contrivance might form a valuable means of saving life in boating and bathing localities.

The issue of the new coinage was preceded by a royal proclamation, and the result is said to be a distinct success. The design for the Queen's head was modelled by Mr T. Brock, R.A., and was subjected to the scrutiny of a Committee before it was finally approved. With the exception of the gold coins and the crown-piece, every new coin will have its value clearly indicated—an innovation which will be welcomed by all, and especially by our foreign visitors, to whom a strange coinage is always a puzzle. The double florin, which has been only recently introduced, and which is so easily confounded with the crown-piece, will be discontinued.

A patent was lately obtained for making 'improvements' in lenses for telescopes, cameras, optical lanterns, &c., the idea being that the manufacture could be considerably cheapened by making the lenses hollow and filling them with water or other liquid. To make the hollow lens, the glass would be blown in a sphere in a box or mould of the required shape. The glasses could also be moulded or pressed into shape. It is very doubtful if good lenses can be produced in this manner, for the slightest departure from true curvature will make a lens useless for any purpose, except perhaps railway signalling and such-like rough work. Hollow lenses have often been used for the adornment of chemists' lamps, for they offer the opportunity of introducing a fluid of any desired colour. But for lenses of large size the system, even if it afforded the necessary perfect results, would be inconvenient, if only on

account of the tendency of glass to fly to pieces with slight changes of temperature when held under any kind of strain, as a vessel full of water must be.

THE WRONG BLACK BAG.

By ANGELO LEWIS, Author of *The Wizard's Tower*, &c.

It was the eve of Good-Friday. Within the modest parlour of No. 13 Primrose Terrace, a little man, wearing a gray felt hat and a red necktie, stood admiring himself in the looking-glass over the mantel-piece. Such a state of things anywhere else would have had no significance whatever. But circumstances proverbially alter cases. At 13 Primrose Terrace it approached the dimensions of a Portent.

Not to keep the reader in suspense, the little man was Benjamin Quelch, clerk in the office of Messrs Cobble & Clink, coal-merchants, and he was about to carry out a desperate resolution. Most men have some secret ambition; Benjamin's was twofold. For years he had yearned to wear a soft felt hat, and to make a trip to Paris; and for years Fate, in the person of Mrs Quelch, had stood in the way and prevented the indulgence of his longing. Quelch being, as we have hinted, exceptionally small of stature, had, in accordance with the mysterious law of opposites, selected the largest lady of his acquaintance as the partner of his joys. He himself was of a meek and retiring disposition. Mrs Quelch, on the other hand, was a woman of stern and decided temperament, with strong views upon most subjects. She administered Benjamin's finances, regulated his diet, and prescribed for him when his health was out of order. Though fond of him in her own way, she ruled him with a rod of iron, and on three points she was inflexible. To make up for his insignificance of stature, she insisted on his wearing the tallest hat that money could procure, to the exclusion of all other headgear. Secondly, on the ground that it looked more 'professional,' she would allow him none but black silk neckties; and lastly, she would not let him smoke. She had further an intense repugnance to all things foreign, holding as an article of faith that no good thing, whether in art, cookery, or morals, was to be found on other than English soil. When Benjamin once, in a rash moment, suggested a trip to Boulogne by way of summer holiday, the suggestion was received in a manner that took away his appetite for a week afterwards.

The prohibition of smoking Quelch did not much mind; for having in his salad days made trial of a cheap cigar, the result somehow satisfied him that tobacco was not in his line, and he ceased to yearn for it accordingly. But the tall hat and the black necktie were constant sources of irritation. He had an idea, based on his having once won a drawing prize at school, that Nature had intended him for an artist, and he secretly lamented the untoward fate which had thrown him away upon coals. Now the few artists Benjamin had chanced to meet affected a soft and slouchy style of headgear, and a considerable amount of freedom, generally with a touch of colour, in the region of the neck.

Such, therefore, in the fitness of things, should have been the hat, and such the neckgear of Benjamin Quelch; and the veto of his wife only made him yearn for them the more intensely.

In later years he had been seized with a longing to see Paris. It chanced that a clerk in the same office, one Peter Flipp, had made one of a personally conducted party on a visit to the gay city. The cost of the trip had been but five guineas; but never, surely, were five guineas so magnificently invested. There was a good deal of romance about Flipp, and it may be that his accounts were not entirely trustworthy; but they so fired the imagination of our friend Benjamin that he had at once begun to hoard up surreptitious sixpences, with the hope that some day he, too, might, by some unforeseen combination of circumstances, be enabled to visit the enchanted city.

And at last that day had come. Mrs Quelch, with her three children and her one domestic, had gone to Lowestoft for an Easter outing; Benjamin and a deaf charwoman, Mrs Widger, being left in charge of the family belongings. Benjamin's Easter holidays were limited to Good-Friday and Easter-Monday; and as it seemed hardly worth while that he should travel so far as Lowestoft for such short periods, Mrs Quelch had thoughtfully arranged that he should spend the former day at the British Museum, and the latter at the Zoological Gardens. Two days after her departure, however, Mr Cobble called Quelch into his private office and told him that, if he liked, he might for once take holiday from the Friday to the Tuesday inclusive, and join his wife at the seaside.

Quelch accepted the boon with an honest intention of employing it as suggested. Indeed, he had even begun a letter to his wife, announcing the pleasing intelligence, and had got as far as 'My dear Penelope,' when a wild and wicked thought struck him: Why should he not spend his unexpected holiday in Paris?

Laying down his pen, he opened his desk and counted his secret hoard. It amounted to five pounds seventeen; twelve shillings more than Flipp's outlay. There was no difficulty in that direction; and nobody would be any the wiser. His wife would imagine that he was in London, while his employers would believe him to be at Lowestoft. There was a brief struggle in his mind, but the tempter prevailed, and with a courage worthy of a better cause, he determined to risk it and go.

And thus it came to pass that, on the evening of our story, Benjamin Quelch, having completed his packing—which merely comprised what he was accustomed to call his 'night-things,' neatly bestowed in a small black hand-bag belonging to Mrs Quelch—stood before the looking-glass and contemplated his guilty splendour—the red necktie and the soft gray felt hat, purchased out of his surplus funds. He had expended a couple of guineas in a second-class return ticket, and another two pounds in 'coupons,' entitling him to bed, breakfast, and dinner for five days at certain specified hotels in Paris. This outlay, with half-a-crown for a pair of gloves, and a bribe of five shillings to secure the silence of Mrs Widger, left him with little more than a pound

in hand, but this small surplus would no doubt amply suffice for his modest needs.

His only regret, as he gazed at himself in the glass, was that he had not had time to grow a moustache, the one thing needed to complete his artistic appearance. But time was fleeting, and he dared not linger over the enticing picture. He stole along the passage and softly opened the street-door. As he did so, a sudden panic came over him, and he felt half inclined to abandon his rash design. But as he wavered, he caught sight of the detested tall hat hanging up in the passage, and he hesitated no longer. He passed out, and closing the door behind him, started at a brisk pace for Victoria Station.

His plans had been laid with much ingenuity, though at a terrible sacrifice of his usual straightforwardness. He had written a couple of letters to Mrs Quelch, to be posted by Mrs Widger on appropriate days, giving imaginary accounts of his visits to the British Museum and Zoological Gardens, with pointed allusions to the behaviour of the elephant and other circumstantial particulars. To ensure the posting of these in proper order, he had marked the dates in pencil on the envelopes in the corner usually occupied by the postage stamp, so that when the latter was affixed the figures would be concealed. He explained the arrangement to Mrs Widger, who promised that his instructions should be faithfully carried out.

After a sharp walk he reached the railway station, and in due course found himself steaming across the Channel to Dieppe. The passage was not especially rough, but to poor Quelch, unaccustomed as he was to the sea, it seemed as if the boat must go to the bottom every moment. To the bodily pains of sea-sickness were added the mental pangs of remorse, and between the two he reached Dieppe more dead than alive; indeed, he would almost have welcomed death as a release from his sufferings.

Even when the boat had arrived at the pier, he still remained in the berth he had occupied all night, and would probably have continued to lie there, had not the steward lifted him by main force to his feet. He seized his black bag with a groan and staggered on deck. Here he felt a little better; but new terrors seized him at the sight of the gold-laced officials and blue-bloused porters who lined each side of the gangway, all talking at the top of their voices, and in tones which seemed, to his unaccustomed ear, to convey a thirst for British blood. No sooner had he landed than he was accosted by a ferocious-looking personage—in truth, a harmless Custom-house officer—who asked him, in French, whether he had anything to declare, and made a movement to take his bag in order to mark it as ‘passed.’ Quelch jumped to the conclusion that the stranger was a brigand bent on depriving him of his property, and he held on to the bag with such tenacity that the *douanier* naturally inferred there was something specially contraband about it. He proceeded to open it, and produced—among sundry other feminine belongings—a lady’s frilled and furbelowed night-dress, from which as he unrolled it, fell a couple of bundles of cigars!

Benjamin’s look of astonishment as he saw these unexpected articles produced from his hand-bag was interpreted by the officials as a look of guilt. As a matter of fact, half stupefied

by the agonies of the night, he had forgotten the precise spot where he had left his own bag, and had picked up in its stead one belonging to the wife of a sporting gentleman on his way to some races at Longchamps. Desiring to smuggle a few ‘weeds,’ and deeming that the presence of such articles would be less likely to be suspected among a lady’s belongings, the sporting gentleman had committed them to his companion’s keeping. Hand-bags, as a rule, are ‘passed,’ unopened, and such would probably have been the case in the present instance had not Quelch’s look of panic excited suspicion. The real owners of the bag had picked up Quelch’s, which it precisely resembled, and were close behind him on the gangway. The lady uttered an exclamation of dismay as she saw the contents of her bag spread abroad by the Customs officer, but was promptly silenced by her husband. ‘Keep your blessed tongue quiet,’ he whispered. ‘If a bloomin’ idiot chooses to sneak our bag, and then to give himself away to the first man that looks at him, he must stand the racket.’ Whereupon the sporting gentleman and lady, first taking a quiet peep into Benjamin’s bag to make sure that it contained nothing compromising, passed the examiner with a smile of conscious innocence, and, after an interval for refreshment at the buffet, took their seats in the train for Paris.

Meanwhile poor Quelch was taken before a pompous individual with an extra large moustache and a double allowance of gold lace on his cap, and charged not only with defrauding the revenue, but with forcibly resisting an officer in the execution of his duty. The accusation being in French, Quelch did not understand a word of it, and in his ignorance took it for granted that he was accused of stealing the strange bag and its contents. Visions of imprisonment, penal servitude, nay, even capital punishment, floated before his bewildered brain. Finally, the official with the large moustache made a speech to him in French, setting forth that for his dishonest attempt to smuggle he must pay a fine of a hundred francs. With regard to the assault on the official, as said official was not much hurt, he graciously agreed to throw that in and make no charge for it. When he had fully explained matters to his own satisfaction, he waited to receive the answer of the prisoner; but none was forthcoming, for the best of reasons. It finally dawned on the official that Quelch might not understand French, and he therefore proceeded to address him in what he considered to be his native tongue.

‘You smoggle; smoggle seegar. Zen it must zat you pay amende, hundred francs. You me understand? Hundred francs—Pay! Pay! Pay!’ At each repetition of the last word he brought down a dirty fist into the palm of the opposite hand, immediately under Quelch’s nose. ‘Hundred francs—Engleesh money, four pound.’

Quelch caught the last words, and was relieved to find that it was merely a money payment that was demanded of him. But he was little better off, for having but a few shillings in his pocket, to pay four pounds was as much out of his power as if it had been four hundred. He determined to appeal to the mercy of his captors. ‘Not got,’ he said apologetically, with a vague idea that by

speaking very elementary English he came somehow nearer to French. 'That all,' he continued, producing his little store, and holding it out beseechingly to the official. '*Pas assez*, not enoff,' growled the latter. Quelch tried again in all his pockets, but only succeeded in finding another threepenny piece. The officer shook his head, and after a brief discussion with his fellows, said: '*Comment-vous appelez-vous, Monsieur?* How you call yourself?'

With a vague idea of keeping his disgrace from his friends, Quelch rashly determined to give a false name. If he had had a few minutes to think it over, he would have invented one for the occasion, but his imagination was not accustomed to such sudden calls, and on the question being repeated, he desperately gave the name of his next-door neighbour, Mr Henry Fladgate. 'Henri Flod-gett,' repeated the officer as he wrote it down. '*Et vous demeurez?* You live, where?' And Quelch proceeded to give the address of Mr Fladgate, 11 Primrose Terrace. '*Très bien.* I send teleg-r-r-amme. *Au violon!*' And poor Benjamin was ignominiously marched to the local police station.

Meanwhile, Quelch's arrangements at home were scarcely working as he had intended. The estimable Mrs Widger, partly by reason of her deafness and partly of native stupidity, had only half understood his instructions about the letters. She knew she was to stamp them, and she knew she was to post them; but the dates in the corners might have been Runic inscriptions for any idea they conveyed to her obfuscated intellect. Accordingly, the first time she visited her usual house of call, which was early on the morning of Good-Friday, she proceeded, in her own language, to 'get the dratted things off her mind' by dropping them both into the nearest pillar-box.

On the following day, therefore, Mrs Quelch at Lowestoft was surprised to find on the breakfast table *two* letters in her Benjamin's handwriting. Her surprise was still greater when, on opening them, she found one to be a graphic account of a visit to the Zoological Gardens on the following Monday. The conclusion was obvious. Either Benjamin had turned prophet, and had somehow got ahead of the almanac, or he was 'carrying on' in some very underhand manner. Mrs Quelch decided for the latter alternative, and determined to get to the bottom of the matter at once. She cut a sandwich, put on her bonnet, and grasping her umbrella in a manner which boded no good to any one who stayed her progress, started by the next train for Liverpool Street.

On reaching home, she extracted from the weeping Widger, who had just been spending the last of Benjamin's five shillings, and was far gone in depression and gin-and-water, that her 'good gentleman' had not been home since Thursday night. This was bad enough; but there was still more conclusive evidence that he was up to no good in the shape of his tall hat, which hung, a silent accuser, on the last peg in the passage.

Having pumped Mrs Widger till there was no more (save tears) to be pumped out of her, Mrs Quelch, still firmly grasping her umbrella, proceeded next door, on the chance that her neigh-

bour, Mrs Fladgate, might be able to give her some information. She found Mrs Fladgate weeping in the parlour with an open telegram before her. Being a woman who did not stand upon ceremony, she read the telegram, which was dated from Dieppe, and ran as follows: 'Monsieur Flodgate here detained for to have smuggle cigars. Fine to pay, one hundred franc. Send money, and he will be release.'

'Oh! the men, the men!' ejaculated Mrs Quelch, as she dropped into an armchair. 'They're all alike. First Benjamin, and now Fladgate! I shouldn't wonder if they had gone off together.'

'You don't mean to say Mr Quelch has gone too?' sobbed Mrs Fladgate.

'He has taken a shameful advantage of my absence. He has not been home since Thursday evening, and his hat is hanging up in the hall.'

'You don't think he has been m-m-murdered?'

'I'm not afraid of *that*,' replied Mrs Quelch. 'It wouldn't be worth anybody's while. But what has he got on his head? that's what I want to know. Of course, if he's with Mr Fladgate in some foreign den of iniquity, that accounts for it.'

'Don't foreigners wear hats?' inquired Mrs Fladgate innocently.

'Not the respectable English sort, I'll be bound,' replied Mrs Quelch. 'Some outlandish rubbish, I daresay. But I thought Mr Fladgate was on his Scotch journey.' (Mr Fladgate, it should be stated, was a traveller in the oil and colour line.)

'So he is. I mean, so he ought to be. In fact, I expected him home to-day. But now he's in p-p-prison; and I may never see him any m-m-more.' And Mrs Fladgate wept afresh.

'Stuff and nonsense!' retorted Mrs Quelch. 'You've only to send the money they ask for, and they'll be glad enough to get rid of him. But I wouldn't hurry; I'd let him wait a bit—you'll see him soon enough, never fear.'

The prophecy was fulfilled sooner than the prophet expected. Scarcely were the words out of her mouth when a cab was heard to draw up at the door, and a moment later Fladgate himself, a big jovial man, wearing a white hat very much on one side, entered the room, and threw a bundle of rugs on the sofa.

'Home again, old girl, and glad of it!—Mornin', Mrs Quelch,' said the new-comer.

Mrs Fladgate gazed at him doubtfully for a moment, and then flung her arms round his neck, ejaculating, 'Saved, saved!'

'Martha,' said Mrs Quelch reprovingly, 'have you no self-respect? Is *this* the way you deal with so shameful a deception?' Then, turning to the supposed offender: 'So, Mr Fladgate, you have escaped from your foreign prison.'

'Foreign how much? Have you both gone dotty, ladies? I've just escaped from a third-class carriage on the London and North-western. The space is limited, but I never heard it called a foreign prison.'

'It is useless to endeavour to deceive us,' said Mrs Quelch sternly. 'Look at that telegram, Mr Fladgate, and deny it if you can. You have been gadding about in some vile foreign place with my misguided husband.'

'Oh, Quelch is in it too, is he? Then it

must be a bad case. But let's see what we have been up to, for, 'pon my word, I'm quite in the dark at present.'

He held out his hand for the telegram, and read it carefully. 'Somebody's been having a lark with you, old lady,' he said to his wife. 'You know well enough where I've been; my regular northern journey, and nowhere else.'

'I don't believe a word of it,' said Mrs Quelch; 'you men are all alike; deceivers every one of you.'

'Much obliged for your good opinion, Mrs Quelch. I had no idea Quelch was such a bad lot. But so far as I am concerned, the thing's easily tested. Here is the bill for my bed last night at Carlisle. Now, if I was in Carlisle, and larking about at Dieppe at the same time, perhaps you'll kindly explain how I managed it.'

Mrs Quelch was staggered, but not convinced. 'But if—if you were at Carlisle, where is Benjamin, and what does this telegram mean?'

'Not being a wizard, I really can't say. But concerning Quelch, we shall find him, never fear. When did he disappear?'

Mrs Quelch told her story, not forgetting the mysterious letter.

'I think I see daylight,' said Fladgate. 'The party who has got into that mess is Quelch, and being frightened out of his wits, he has given my name instead of his own. That's about the size of it!'

'But Benjamin doesn't smoke. And how should he come to be at Dieppe?'

'Went for a holiday, I suppose. As for smoking, I shouldn't have thought he was up to it; but with that sat-upon sort of man—begging your pardon, Mrs Quelch—you never know where he may break out. Worms will turn, you know, and sometimes they take a wrong turning.'

'But Benjamin would never dare'—

'That's just it. He daren't do anything when you've got your eye on him. When you haven't, perhaps he may, and perhaps he mayn't. The fact is, you hold up his head too tight, and if he jibs now and then, you can't wonder at it.'

'You have a very coarse way of putting things, Mr Fladgate. Mr Quelch is not a horse, that I am aware of.'

'We won't quarrel about the animal, my dear madam, but you may depend upon it my solution's right. A hardened villain, like myself, say, would never have got into such a scrape; but Quelch don't know enough of the world to keep himself out of mischief. They've got him in quod, that's clear, and the best thing you can do is to send the coin and get him out again.'

'Send money to those swindling Frenchmen! Never! If Benjamin is in prison, I will fetch him out myself.'

'You would never risk that dreadful sea-passage,' exclaimed Mrs Fladgate. 'And how will you manage the language? You don't understand French.'

'Oh! I shall do very well,' said the heroic woman. 'They won't talk French to me!'

That same night, a female passenger crossed by the boat from Newhaven to Dieppe. The passage was rough, and the passenger was very seasick, but she still sat grimly upright, never for

one moment relaxing her grasp on the handle of her silk umbrella. What she went through on landing, how she finally obtained her husband's release, and what explanations passed between the re-united pair, must be left to the reader's imagination, for Mrs Quelch never told the story. Twenty-four hours later, a four-wheeled cab drew up at the Quelches' door, and from it descended, first a stately female, and then a woe-begone little man in a soft felt hat and a red necktie, both sorely crushed and soiled, with a black bag in his hand. 'Is there a fire in the kitchen?' asked Mrs Quelch the moment she set foot in the house. Being assured that there was, she proceeded down the kitchen stairs, Quelch meekly following her. 'Now,' she said, pointing to the black bag. 'Those—Things!' Benjamin opened the bag, and tremblingly took out the frilled night-dress and the cigars. His wife pointed to the fire, and he meekly laid them on it. 'Now that necktie.' The necktie followed the cigars. 'And that thing;' and the hat crowned the funeral pile.

The smell was peculiar, and to the ordinary nose disagreeable, but to Mrs Quelch it was as the odour of burnt incense. She watched the heap as it smouldered away, and finally dispersed the embers by a vigorous application of the poker.

'Now, Benjamin,' she said to her trembling spouse, 'I forgive you. But if ever again'—

The warning was left unspoken, but it was not needed. Benjamin's one experience has more than satisfied his yearning for soft raiment and foreign travel, and his hats are taller than ever.

UNTIL THE EVENING.

Tired with the daily toil for daily bread,
The spirit slaving for the body's needs,
The brain and nerve are dulled, and the heart bleeds
And breaks with grief of brooding thought unsaid:
Were we but born to labour and be fed?
To spend our souls in lowly, trivial deeds,
Mere sordid coin the crown of what succeeds?
Ah! yet press on, though with a fainting tread—

Till Evening ends our work and stills our cries:
Then we may find our lowliness is our height,
Our crown, the tasks we wrought with sobbing
breath;

As common things a sunset glorifies,
This life, at last, may robe itself in light
And stand transfigured at the touch of death.

A. ST J. ADCOCK.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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EXTRADITION.

MANY and intricate as are the problems of international law, the question of Extradition remains at once the most important and the most familiar. The complexity of business transactions and the vast extension of credit, coupled with the multiplication of the means of travel, have rendered the subject one of the greatest importance. The historic origin of the practice is to be found in the relations of the different provinces of ancient Rome. Under the Republic a citizen accused of a capital offence might at any time, before judgment was pronounced, escape the sentence by going into voluntary exile; and certain of the allied cities were specified by treaty as inviolable places of refuge; but under the Empire these cities were absorbed into the imperial dominions and lost their protective character. As to claims of extradition made by the Romans upon independent nations, they seem to have been confined to enemies of the State. Thus we find that at the end of the war with Antiochus, king of Syria, the Romans stipulated for the surrender of Hannibal, who, however, escaped and fled to the king of Bithynia, from whom he was also demanded, and would have been surrendered had he not committed suicide.

It is a remarkable fact that in the early cases in modern history it was always for political offences that surrender was claimed, though at present it is almost the only ground of refusal. But such an offence does not mean a crime committed from political motives, but one committed during a time of civil war or open insurrection. The French government, in 1880, refused to extradite Hartmann, who was suspected of planning the plot against the Czar at Moscow, in December 1879. When the Swiss government, in November 1890, demanded the extradition of one Castioni, who had shot a member of the ministry, the English judges gave him the benefit of this exception in the treaty. Charles II., as is well known, pursued some of the murderers of his father with relentless hate,

and in 1661 concluded a treaty with Denmark in which the latter agreed to deliver up on requisition all persons who had been concerned in the murder of Charles I. The States-general of Holland surrendered some of the regicides without treaty stipulations; but in 1662 they agreed to give up any persons excepted from the English Act of Indemnity, and all other persons demanded by the English Government. James II. put this treaty in force in demanding the surrender of Burnet, not yet a bishop, but acting as private secretary to the Prince of Orange. He describes it very fully in his *History of his Own Time*. He states that the king's principal cause of anger against him was a report of his intended marriage to a wealthy lady at the Hague; and proceedings were set on foot in Scotland. Burnet, however, got wind of the matter before news of it reached D'Albeville, then English ambassador, and petitioned for naturalisation, which was readily granted. When the ambassador demanded his banishment, Burnet claimed protection of the States as a naturalised subject. The demand was subsequently repeated in more forcible terms; but the States refused to surrender him.

One of the most familiar cases of extradition for a political offence was that of Napper Tandy, known popularly as the hero of *The Wearing of the Green*. Tandy, having made a vain attempt to excite a rebellion in Donegal, set sail for Norway; and after landing at Bergen, made his way with a few companions to Hamburg. The English Government peremptorily insisted on the surrender of the refugees as British subjects who were in rebellion against their sovereign; while the French Government claimed them as their citizens, and threatened Hamburg with the most serious consequences if they were given up. After a long and painful hesitation, the Senate, in October 1799, finally decided, and surrendered Tandy and three of his companions to England. The French Directory retaliated by a letter declaring war against Hamburg, imposed an embargo on its shipping, and threatened still severer measures. The Senate sent a most abject

apology to Napoleon, describing their utter helplessness, and the ruin that must have befallen their town if they had resisted. Their deputies, however, were received with the bitterest reproaches; they were told they had committed a breach of the laws of hospitality 'which would not have taken place among the barbarian hordes of the desert,' and an act which would be their 'eternal reproach.'

Prior to the Extradition Act of 1870 (amended in 1873), which settled the law of England as it at present stands, the two most important agreements on the subject between this country and foreign powers were those entered into with the United States in 1842, and with France in the following year. In the latter case no exception was made of political offences, and the law was practically inoperative, only one case of surrender taking place in twenty-two years. This state of things, as might be expected, caused great dissatisfaction in France, and was the subject of much diplomatic correspondence. Finally, in 1865 the French ambassador gave six months' notice of the termination of the convention of 1843; but after considerable negotiation, it was prolonged for a further period.

Spain has been deemed a safe harbour of refuge by many criminals; but even before the British extradition treaty with that country in 1878, offenders had been given up to justice. An extradition treaty was concluded with Germany in 1872, and with Russia in 1887. The list of extradition crimes fixed by the Act of 1870 includes murder, manslaughter, forgery, larceny, frauds by bankers, and extortion by threats. Dynamiters who have attempted to wreck property do not get the benefit of political aims under English law.

In no country, perhaps, does the question of extradition take such an important place as the United States. At the formation of the Union, the question of the surrender of criminals who fled from one State to another was one of the difficulties with which the founders of the Republic had to deal. The proximity of Canada brought the question within the range of national politics; and it is to the credit of the American judicial bench that its members were equal to dealing with the difficult questions that arose. 'In the matter of extradition,' says Sir Edward Clarke, 'the American law was until 1870 better than that of any country in the world; and the decisions of the American judges are the best existing expositions of the duty of extradition in its relations at once to the judicial rights of nations and the general interests of the civilisation of the world.' The first case in America which brought up the question of the surrender of a criminal to a foreign power occurred in 1784. In that year the Chevalier de Longchamps was indicted at Philadelphia for threatening bodily harm to M. Marbois, the French Consul-general, and also for an assault upon him. It appeared that the Chevalier went to the consul's official residence, used violent language, and called him names; and two days later, in a public place, struck at him with a stick. He was convicted; and subsequently President Washington informed the judges that the Minister of France demanded that M. de Longchamps, having appeared in the uniform of a French officer, should be delivered up to France; to which the judges replied that

he could not lawfully be surrendered. The most important question of extradition between this country and the United States arose in the case of Charles Laurence in 1876, the point at issue being whether a person extradited for one crime could, after being tried and acquitted, be put on his trial for another offence other than that for which he was surrendered, without being afforded an opportunity of returning to the country by which his surrender was granted. Laurence was a Canadian, who subsequently became naturalised in the United States; and having come to England, was demanded, under the treaty of 1842, on a charge of forging and uttering a certain bond and affidavit. He was surrendered; and on his arrival at New York he was arrested on three warrants upon three separate indictments, neither being founded upon the charges for which he was extradited. While Laurence's case was pending, a demand was made for the extradition of Ezra D. Winslow on a charge of forgery in the United States. Lord Derby, however, on behalf of the Government of the day, absolutely refused to surrender him until the United States gave an assurance that he should not, until he had been restored or had an opportunity of returning to Her Majesty's dominions, be detained or tried in the United States for any offence committed prior to his surrender, other than the extradition crimes proved by the facts on which the surrender would be grounded.

The case caused great excitement at the time; and so lately as 1886, a Convention was signed by Mr Phelps and Lord Rosebery, which in one of its articles provided that a fugitive criminal should not be detained or tried for any offence committed prior to his surrender other than the extradition crime, without having an opportunity of returning to that State which surrendered him. An enlargement of the Ashburton treaty of 1842 was ratified by the American Senate, and gazetted in London in 1890.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate; A Soldier and a Gentleman*; &c.

CHAPTER XL.—MR DOUGHTY EXPLAINS.

'WHICH way?' asked Isabel, when both she and Mr Alexander Doughty were on the pavement.

'Let us,' said Mr Doughty, turning his back on the New North Road, 'walk in this direction, Miss Raynor,' and he was politely careful to take the outer side of the pavement. 'This,' he continued, 'will be quieter for our purpose.'

'But,' asked Isabel, stopping short, 'is it not in this direction that you live?'

'It is,' said Mr Doughty, with solemn emphasis. 'But you shall hear, if you will permit me to explain;' and they went on again. 'Your father and myself had rooms some time ago in the house of Mrs Ackland Snow. She is an excellent woman, but rather fidgety: and her fidgets and the odour of her Irish twist, brown shag, and penny Pickwicks were too much for your father's shattered nerves. It is possible that you do not know that your father's nerves *are* shattered;

they are not shattered in exactly the way mine are, but they are *shattered*.'

'Will you be so good, Mr Doughty,' said Isabel, 'as explain to me, as you promised, the character of your connection with my father?'

She said that somewhat curtly, and then felt a little ashamed of her curtness; for the forces of attraction and repulsion were striving within her: she was drawn to think kindly and gratefully of Mr Doughty, because—she had understood from Mrs Snow's words—he had been a faithful friend to her father; and yet, when she looked at the shaking Bardolphian creature beside her and thought of his abject behaviour of the evening before, she suspected that he might have had to do with her father's declension, and dislike and disgust swayed her for the moment.

'Your father and myself, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, 'are bound together in a friendship of considerable standing. A good many years ago—indeed, I may say, when you were an infant in your mother's arms—I was your father's sub.'

'His what?'

'His "sub," which is, I may explain, an abbreviation used among men of the Press for sub-editor. I was his sub,' he repeated, as if he enjoyed the word, 'on *The Weekly Bulletin*, and we worked together with the extremest harmony; and the harmony arose, I may say, from kindness on his side and good-will on my own. I admired your father, Miss Raynor. He was a man—and he is,' said he, half-aside, and as if to some one who was likely to deny it—'of brilliant abilities, all of which were squandered in editorial and journalistic drudgery for an unenlightened public. I wrote, if you will permit me to say so, with a pen dipped in common ink'—

'And whisky,' thought Isabel, but she refrained from hurting Mr Doughty's feelings by saying it.

—'he,' continued Mr Doughty, 'wrote with a pen steeped in a finer fluid. Moreover, he was the best company in the world—at least in the whole range of Fleet Street; and for that matter he is still; yes, he is still—occasionally.'

'You mean, I suppose,' said Isabel bitterly, 'when he is in a condition in which I would not like to see him?'

'Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty weightily, and he stopped to add emphasis to his words, 'you are under a grave misapprehension. If my meaning had been as you have conceived it, I should not have alluded to the matter in conversation with a lady.' And Mr Doughty walked on again. 'No,' he continued, 'the meaning you suggested would apply, perchance, to the miserable individual now walking by your side, but it would *not* apply to the chief. I may be—I believe I am—good company only when I have achieved some refreshment; for instance, I am not myself to-night, I beg to assure you, but it is not so with the chief. We both have our foibles, our weaknesses—our vices, if you will,' he added, in a ferocity of criticism of 'self and friend,' 'but, as I ventured to observe a moment ago, they are not alike: I have mine; the chief has his.'

Up to that point Isabel had held herself in: she had hoped that by patiently listening to Mr Alexander Doughty, she would arrive quickly at an understanding of the relations between him and her father, and of the condition in

which her father was living; but now, between impatience with his sonorous maunderings and a strange acute feeling of jealousy that this man—whom she could not but despise, strive as she might after a better feeling for him—that this man knew all about her father, and thought it necessary to defend him against the misunderstandings of his ignorant daughter, she let herself go.

'It is a strange, an unnatural thing,' she broke forth, 'that I should be gathering all the knowledge I have of my father from a—a person whom I have met in the most casual way'—

'And that, you would say, Miss Raynor,' interrupted Mr Doughty, 'not under the most favourable circumstances.'

'Certainly,' said she—for she could not spare him now—'not under the most favourable circumstances. But that I have been ignorant of my father, or of his condition, is not my fault. It is his own—or yours, who have come between us. When he first wrote to me three years ago, why did he refuse to see me? Was it you that persuaded him to that?'

'I, Miss Raynor?' exclaimed Mr Doughty, stopping again—this time in the sheerest amazement. 'God forbid! you little know, Miss Raynor. You totally misunderstand me;' and his hands began to tremble as he clasped them on the head of his stick. 'I would spend my last shilling with your father: I *have* spent it oftener than once! I would give my last drop of blood—such as it is—to serve him! I come between you? I persuaded him not to see his own daughter—and such a daughter? You little know!'

'Forgive me,' said she in an impulse of self-reproach when she saw his distress. 'No doubt I have wrongly accused you. But how can I understand if you will not explain? Do not tell me any more about my father's life: he can tell me that himself; but tell me, as you promised, how you come to be receiving letters intended for him, and what you meant by saying he knew nothing of it?'

'Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, 'bear with me an instant, and I will tell you succinctly. It was I that saw the announcement in the papers of your appointment as mistress in the College for Ladies. I showed it to your father, and begged him, almost on my knees, to make himself known to you; but he refused absolutely to do so, for reasons which he thought sufficient, but which I ventured to consider inadequate. Your father's situation was at that particular moment desperate; our uncle—ahem!—well, Miss Raynor, it was desperate beyond anything you can dream of desperation.'

'Perhaps,' said Isabel, 'I can dream more in accordance with reality than you imagine.'

'At anyrate, Miss Raynor, to understand how I came to do what I am about to relate to you that I did, you must know that I had for years been accustomed to act, if I may be allowed the comparison, as jackal to the lion, and that it had become necessary for me to assume the entire control of our joint affairs, your father's and my own, financial and other. I would relate to you how that had become necessary, but you have signified to me that it would not be agreeable.'

'Not now, please,' said Isabel; 'go on merely with your explanation.'

'Very good, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty. 'When we were in a tight place—that is to say, when we found ourselves in straitened circumstances'—

'In short, when you were hard up.'

'—in short, when we were hard up, it was I who had to find relief from our embarrassment: it devolved upon me to find replenishment for the exchequer.'

'Do you mean,' asked Isabel coldly, 'in plain words that you have had to keep my father?'

'Not at all. Do not misunderstand me, I pray. I am not uttering complaint; I am but stating a fact. And I ask you to remember that I said I was jackal to the lion. It therefore fell upon me, when provision for our wants was required, to go the round to find occupation for the refined pen of your father, or, failing that, for my own rude quill.'

'And if both of these failed?' asked Isabel, in sure expectation of the answer.

'Then,' said Mr Doughty, 'I would try to find temporary accommodation from a friend. Both these resources failed us at the time I spoke of.'

'Now I understand completely,' said Isabel. 'The jackal had one trick—one resource—more than the lion.'

'I ventured to suggest to your father'—

'I understand,' interrupted Isabel. 'You suggested to my father that he should apply to me for help, and he would not hear of it; he said he was not yet fallen so low as to ask his daughter, a girl only beginning life for herself, for such help as his weakness or his wickedness would not allow him to provide for himself. Was not that what he said?' she demanded eagerly.

'Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, 'you are as clever as you are charming. He spoke much to that effect.'

'Mr Doughty,' said Isabel, 'I shall be obliged to you exceedingly if you will not pay me compliments.—You, however, had not the same view as my father, your old chief. You therefore wrote to me in his name, telling him nothing of it.'

'What first made me think of it was that my handwriting was not unlike your father's.'

'And you received from me a certain sum of money, which I had sent as to my father.'

'And which, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, 'I religiously expended on your father, and on him alone.'

'Oh, that is not a point we need discuss. The jackal, I suppose, is worthy of his hire.'

'Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty with palpable emotion—he had stopped again and faced her with his hands clasped on his stick—'you should not say that. It is unworthy of you to stab so cruelly one who has learned to admire your generous qualities, even though that one is the miserable, broken individual before you. You should not—you should not, really.' His lip trembled with emotion, and a tear sprang in his eye, which he ferociously flicked away with his finger. 'If there is one person in the world whom I care for besides the chief, it is yourself, and I expect you to believe me when I say that

whenever I have applied to you it has been only on your father's account, and that whatever you have bestowed in answer to my applications has been strictly expended on your father to the uttermost farthing.'

'I believe you,' said Isabel, impulsively giving him her hand. 'Forgive me.'

She was so sorry for the pain she had evidently given the poor creature, and she so saw him touched with a pathetic dignity, that a new revulsion of feeling came upon her in which she could almost have kissed him to assuage the pain she had caused. But the trembling and spasmodic fervour with which he grasped her proffered hand drove back all such inclination.

'Are we not nearly there yet?' she asked, going on again.

'To tell you the simple truth, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, now less constrained and more cheerful, 'your father is not in our rooms.'

Isabel stopped at once. 'Where is he, then?' she asked.

'At this precise moment he is waiting in a certain house in a lane off the Ratcliff Highway for his bill to be paid.'

'Bill?—for what? Not—for drink?' asked Isabel with a new horror upon her.

'No, Miss Raynor, not for drink. That is not the form the chief's refreshment takes.'

'What is it, then?' demanded Isabel. 'Tell me the truth. I hope I am not afraid or ashamed to hear what you may have to say.'

'Well, Miss Raynor, in a word: the devil that has tempted him and brought him to his present pass is opium. I have seen its accursed method of working—excuse my strong epithet—from its initial stage. He began to smoke opium from an innocent and laudable motive, nothing less, indeed, than to find "copy" to be sold for what it would bring in the Magazine market to furnish forth the expenses attendant on your birth. He visited an opium den of the East End in the days when both opium dens and the East End properly so called were much more dangerous places to enter than they are now. He went there by himself, and some time later he piloted no less a person than Charles Dickens thither. I am declaring to you the simple truth. But he did not make a habit of smoking the seductive drug until your poor mother's death. Then he was distracted, and could find no comfort in anything, and forgetfulness only in his opium sleep.—My dear Miss Raynor, let the rest be silence.'

'Mr Doughty,' exclaimed Isabel, without a moment's hesitation, 'let us go at once and pay his bill and get him out of the dreadful place!'

'My dear young lady,' said Mr Doughty, 'I should say "agreed" with the utmost alacrity, were it not that my purse is absolutely empty. To say truth,' added he, with an attempt to laugh which sounded rusty and unused, 'I had looked forward to a remittance from you to-night to release him.'

'Come,' said she hurriedly. 'Which way must we go? I have money.'

Mr Doughty set his face towards the New North Road. Isabel swept along the pavement at a pace which somewhat taxed Mr Doughty's rheumatic limbs to maintain.

'We must take a cab,' said he. 'And will

it not be best for me to go alone? It is a dangerous region for a young lady to venture into, more particularly at this time of night.'

'A cab by all means,' said Isabel; 'but I shall go with you; I am not afraid.'

'It is,' said he, 'for you to ordain, Miss Raynor, and for me to obey. It must be a four-wheeler then.'

They hurried on in silence, till they had passed Mrs Ackland Snow's again, and were nearing the New North Road.

'He goes off, I suppose,' said Isabel, 'at intervals to this place, and remains there till you find him and release him?'

'Exactly so,' said Mr Doughty.

'How long has he been gone this time?' asked she.

'Three days,' answered he.

'Three days! I should have thought that was enough to kill a man! Dreadful! Dreadful! Let us make haste!'

When they reached the New North Road, Mr Doughty produced from his waistcoat pocket a whistle and blew a call, which was speedily answered by the appearance of a four-wheeler. He opened the door, and when Isabel had entered the cab he closed it again.

'But are you not coming?' she asked.

'I am coming certainly,' answered Mr Doughty.

'But my place is with the driver on the box.'

'I cannot hear of such a thing,' said Isabel.

'You will catch cold: you are not wrapt up.'

'I am quite sufficiently clothed, thank you, Miss Raynor; and I would prefer, if you will permit me, to sit on the box and smoke a pipe.'

Thus it came to pass that Isabel did not hear what instructions were given to the driver; and they drove away, on and on, through regions to her altogether unknown. She remembered, however, that Mr Doughty had said that the opium den was near the Ratcliff Highway, and she was familiar enough with her map of London to know the direction they must take. They passed down the New North Road; and presently they left the bustle and the glare behind, and rolled through darkness and comparative silence, with large comfortable-seeming houses on either hand, where in the past had dwelt substantial men from the City, whose descendants or successors have gone farther afield; over the dark and gruesome canal with evil-smelling chemical works on the one hand and tall square piles of sweet-smelling wood on the other; on again through the darkness, picked out here and there at wide intervals with tall and despondent gas lamps, and out again into clamour and bustle, blazing gas in shops and gin palaces and flaring naphtha on the stalls; and then out into what was plainly a great thoroughfare and past an imposing church, withdrawn deep into the shadows at the junction of two ways, and looking serenely and pityingly down on the surging tides of human life, business and pleasure, sin and sorrow, that met about its gates; on and still on.

During this progress, with the deafening rattle of the wheels and of the slung windows in her ears, Isabel passed into a semi-conscious state. She knew she was wearing farther and farther east; she saw how different were the scenes she was passing through from those to which she was accustomed in the neighbourhood of her lodgings, a

good many miles behind her; and she wondered anew at the vast, the mysterious London in which she dwelt. She was a tolerably learned young lady, and she was able to compare in her mind the great capitals of the world—to compare, at least, what she had read of those in the past with what she knew of this in the present—and she said to herself that, though Rome was great, and Babylon was great, and Nineveh, and Thebes, yet London was greater far by reason, not of fine buildings and a general impression of magnificence and imposing outward show, but of its vastness and its swarm of men and women, each in an orderly way doing that which is right in his own eyes, none daring to make him afraid. The wonder of London, she felt, is its people. Then she went on to think particularly of her father—a weak unit swimming, floating hither and thither in this sea of humanity. Now that she was definitely set out to find him, her anxiety concerning him and her horror of his situation had changed into a kind of gentle romantic expectation. She had read of De Quincey, Coleridge, and other confirmed consumers of opium, and the glamour of these names made her father's fault appear less a vice than an amiable and poetic weakness.

She was rudely awakened out of these dreams by the stoppage of the cab and the appearance of Mr Doughty at the door. He said it was necessary to descend there and to walk a little way. She descended, and walked along the pavement by his side—not without a tremor or two, for dark, foreign, and wild-looking men—browned and baked with wind and sun—stared curiously at her as she passed. They came to the corner of a dark and noisome alley, which they were about to turn down, when they were accosted by a policeman. He looked hard at Mr Doughty.

'Oh,' said he, 'it's you—is it, sir? Your chief down there again, I suppose. Is the lady going down with you?'

'Yes, policeman,' said Mr Doughty, in his profoundest tones, 'the lady thinks it necessary to go with me: she thinks it absolutely necessary.'

'In that case, ma'am—or miss,' said the policeman—'I must go down with you—only to see that no harm comes to you; for they're a queer lot down there.'

PANORAMIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

PANORAMIC Photography has been the dream of scientific workers with the camera for nigh half a century, and therefore to have achieved complete success in a field of work exceedingly difficult is indeed to have reached a pinnacle of photographic and scientific renown. The invention of the 'Panoram' by Colonel R. W. Stewart, commanding the Royal Engineers of the Western District, at Devonport, must be classed as one of the most important photographic inventions of the age, and as being in advance of anything of its kind up to the present. When the gallant officer took up the question, he entered upon the work with a knowledge of the difficulties which surrounded it—and, indeed, as he proceeded these became even more marked—but determined to proceed and succeed. As may be supposed, he had to invent, discard, and rein-

vent, throwing over ideas which had seemed to be in theory exactly what were necessary, but which failed when carried out. And so model after model was made and set aside. But the inventor was on the right track, and at last came to a point, and the adoption of a principle which would accomplish the end sought for.

At this juncture Colonel Stewart met Mr. W. Gage Tweedy of Plymouth, who had, it appeared, been also considering the subject, and who had published a valuable contribution to the question in 1863. The correct principle was secured in the camera which Colonel Stewart had designed when he met Mr. Tweedy, and that gentleman's clever mechanical skill has enabled the two to produce an instrument which it may be said is practically perfect. It is at once an instrument of great delicacy of action, but at the same time of simplicity of working, and its results are always the same. As this will meet the view of many who are interested in photographic work, but who lay no claim to being scientists, it may be stated that the results are brought about by means of a camera of exceedingly moderate dimensions—much smaller than would be necessary for the production of views in the ordinary way—pivoted at a central point, and standing on a tripod head, in appearance much after the usual manner. Within the camera is clockwork mechanism worked by a spring, this being wound up from time to time. The gear being set in motion, a roller begins automatically to wind upon it the sensitised celluloid film which is contained upon another roller, a pressure roller keeping it taut and bearing upon another roller. This last roller is what actually secures the action of the camera, as a shaft from it passes through the bottom of the camera, and has at its lower end a pulley, around which pass two turns of a band of silk which revolves the stand to which the camera is attached, and, of course, the camera itself. While the sensitised film is being unrolled, and the camera is, as it were, also unrolling the view upon the film, the motion being exactly at the same rate, the picture falls upon the film as though it were still.

It will thus be seen that the action of unrolling the film is the source of the motion of the camera. The idea is clever, and the execution is perfect and accurate. The focus is a fixed one, though it would be possible to arrange for the use of lenses of varying foci, and, of course, of change of speed in the movement of the camera itself.

The arrangements whereby exposure is made are as clever and complete as are the points already referred to. The camera being ready and wound up, it is carefully levelled—by a level attached—and directed to the point from which a start is to be made. It is set in motion by a pneumatic release, this allowing a fly to rotate at a determined speed, arranged by the operator, controlling the unrolling of the film and the speed of the camera. The photographic image impinges upon the film through a V-shaped aperture, answering to the usual diaphragm of a camera, and gives the required relative exposure to foreground and to sky. This aperture can be varied in size and shape, and can be arranged in combination with the speed of the camera to practically obtain an instantaneous

effect. The rotation of the camera can be stopped at the completion of the circle, or at any point within it that may be desired; or, as it may be put in the terse words of the inventor, 'it will gratify the photographer's wants, whether these be confined to the limits of the parish pump or embrace a full sweep of the horizon.'

Of course, so complete and beautiful an instrument could hardly have been secured but for the aid of such a flexible and transparent material as celluloid. The earlier attempts of inventors were directed to the production of pictures upon curved and flat plates. In 1845, Martens, an engraver of Paris, sought to secure such pictures by the bending of a Daguerreotype plate into a cylindrical curve. A lens placed opposite to the centre of the curve deposited the photographic image, through a slit, upon the plate; and a considerable measure of success followed these efforts. Some nine years later he used a modification of his first invention, with flat plates. Gavella, in 1848, in Paris, created considerable stir by the exhibition of panoramic pictures viewed through a lens. He appears to be considered the first who had gone into the matter in a thoroughly scientific manner. As an officer of Engineers he probably approached the question with a view to its use in connection with military surveying; and he patented the idea in England in 1857, proposing to use paper as the flexible material for the photographic image. But after Gavella in 1848, Henry Fox Talbot in 1849 may be said to have gone forward by proposing to use coated paper for 'panoramic views of scenery which were produced upon a curved surface by the movement of the object glass of the camera.' In 1857, Burnett, an English worker, proposed modifying a roller slide for paper so as 'to take a view all round in one piece.' In the same year Ross, of New York, proposed to take the complete circle in three flat plates of one hundred and twenty degrees each.

One of the most interesting efforts in the problem of panoramic photography was Dr Chevalier's plane table, submitted to the Société d'Encouragement, of Paris, in 1858. In this case the picture passing through the lens was deflected upon a plane table. Each sector of the plate could be impressed with the photographic image. It does not appear that the apparatus came into practical use.

The Pantascopic camera of Johnson, patented in 1864, appears to be the camera described by Mr. Tweedy of Plymouth in 1863. It was designed upon the revolving principle, and so far as it went produced very excellent results.

Several workers were considering the matter and inventing between 1864 and 1884, when the Cylindrograph of Moessard was invented. It was somewhat similar in type to Martens's instrument, the lens being pivoted in the centre, and a flexible celluloid film in a dark slide being used for the production of the photographic image. It is necessarily a large instrument as compared with that of Colonel Stewart. And though its work is good, yet it is costly, for a recently constructed instrument, made for the Canadian Pacific Railway, cost one hundred pounds or more, and was of very considerable weight and size. This camera took pictures of a length of forty-five inches by eighteen, though we believe less than

one hundred and eighty degrees were comprehended.

Immediately preceding the 'Panoram,' the 'Cyclographe' of Damoiseau may be said to have been the latest step in panoramic cameras. It is used with a film which unrolls automatically, but is somewhat heavy and unwieldy, as well as rather complicated in action for general working.

From our résumé of the work of inventors, it will be seen that great scientific knowledge has been brought to bear upon the subject, and it is perhaps on its scientific side that the 'Panoram' will be most useful. In connection with surveying, and especially in mountainous and inaccessible regions, it is believed that the instrument will be immensely valuable because of its perfect work. Those whose knowledge enables them to judge will readily see that there is a very large field for the use of such a camera; indeed, we believe the Royal Geographical Society is likely to take it up. Already, though it may be said to have been but just completed, the fame of the instrument is growing; and in Germany it has created a strong impression in scientific military circles. In other parts of the world also, a keen interest has been awakened. It is patented in all the principal countries of the world.

Though devised for such ambitious work as that to which it may particularly be devoted, yet it cannot but be admitted to be a triumph of simplicity, for its mechanism has nothing of a cumbrous character about it, and it does its work directly. Several pictures eight inches wide by sixty inches long can be secured in a camera which weighs under four pounds, and the worker who has hitherto been content to do quarter-plate work may now make more ambitious attempts, and not be more heavily laden than he has hitherto been. As the inventors have also devised means by which these panoramic negatives shall produce pictures to be thrown upon a screen, one may confidently expect much instruction and entertainment for the general public, as these pictures are displayed. And so science may be promoted while those not scientifically inclined may be benefited.

BY ACCIDENT.

By H. F. ABELL.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

EVERY Thursday Mr Richard Marsden dined with his uncle Christopher at the palatial residence of the latter in Portland Place. Every Thursday uncle and nephew disagreed and parted in high dudgeon with each other—an odd state of affairs, and the more so because the eccentric old bachelor loved his handsome young nephew very dearly, and the feeling was warmly reciprocated. The disagreement was always on the same point—the fixed, and, from the avuncular point of view, unaccountable, determination of the young man not to take unto himself as wife the young woman who had been selected by his uncle as most eligible for that position. The discussion came up at odd times—sometimes during dessert, sometimes when uncle and nephew were having their final smoke together, but it never failed to come up.

Old Mr Christopher Marsden, although a bachelor, loved the society of the fair sex, and at his weekly dinners almost as regular a guest as Dick Marsden was Marian Akhurst. For this young lady old Mr Marsden had a respect which almost amounted to worship. She was a nursing 'sister,' the daughter of one of Mr Christopher's oldest friends, and having been left an orphan at an early age, had been obliged to turn to and fight her own battle in life. Strangely enough, her first professional visit was to Portland Place; and it was as nurse by Mr Christopher's bedside during a long and trying illness that she had impressed herself upon his mind as being the very wife for his nephew, his only relation in the world. She was a brown-haired, brown-eyed girl of two or three and twenty, with a kind, smiling face and a gentle manner, which familiarity with human suffering had not roughened; and although she was unfashionable enough to call herself Marian Akhurst instead of Sister Beata or Sister Lachryma, her name was already a household word in the mouths of those whose business lay in the alleviation of human suffering.

Every Thursday evening at dessert Mr Christopher urged upon his nephew the advisability, nay, the necessity, of his marrying Marian Akhurst. 'I cannot conceive,' he would say, 'how you can be such a blind fool as to throw away the chance of marrying such a girl. The girl loves you; I am sure of that; and as to the question of £ s. d.—why, you may leave that to me.'

The young man's answer was invariable: 'I cannot.'

'You cannot!' the old gentleman would retort. 'What on earth do you mean? You're young; you're unfettered; you're good—nay, splendid prospects. The girl's a lady, and yet you bleat out "I cannot!" Have you asked her?—No. Have you sounded her?—No. I'm an old bachelor because I never happened to meet the girl who would suit me. But you! Pooh! It disgusts and annoys me!'

The young man bore the reproaches quietly; he never flared up and made impatient replies; he never argued; he simply said: 'I cannot.'

This imperturbability angered the old gentleman far more than retort or discussion would have done, and in his determination not to comprehend it, he overlooked the possibility of the young man's having a very sufficient reason for his invariable 'I cannot.'

Poor fellow! He had. Marian Akhurst was to him his good angel on earth; he loved her passionately and devotedly. He would have shed his heart's blood, or would have gone to the uttermost parts of the earth, to serve her. He knew that she loved him; and yet he was forced to treat her as an ordinary acquaintance, and dared not say that which his sorrowing heart often urged him to say.

And she knew that the handsome young man with the splendid prospects had a sorrow which could be healed by no earthly skill, and that for acting in direct opposition to his longings he had sufficient reason.

Upon one Thursday evening the disagreement between uncle and nephew was so marked that, as no ladies were of the party, and the young

man foresaw that the unpleasantness would be continued until his usual hour for taking his leave, he pleaded indisposition, and went away early. He walked to Regent's Circus, and took an eastward-bound omnibus. At the Bank he alighted, and passing along Throgmorton Street, followed Bishopsgate Street until he reached a many-lighted edifice upon the façade of which appeared in gas letters the legend 'Arcadia Music Hall.' He did not enter, but sauntered up and down the crowded pavement with his weekly cigar in his mouth until the clocks struck ten, when he turned down a narrow side-lane, and waited at a door illuminated by a feeble lamp, around which were lounging half-a-dozen youths of the usual East End type. Every now and then people passed out at the door. When they were men, the youths took no notice. When they were women, the youths stopped their loud chaff and mirth and assumed the airs of gallants, just as they had seen more gilded youths do at the stage doors of similar establishments farther west.

Presently a tall girl wrapped in an ulster came to the door. The youths nudged each other, and the name 'Stunning Gipsy Jane' passed from mouth to mouth. Dick Marsden approached her, took the paper parcel from her hand, offered her his arm, and walked away with her—with his wife. They walked in silence for some minutes. Then Dick said: 'Well, Leah, how did the new song go off?'

'What? do you mean "Caught him on the 'op"? —Oh, very well. Three encores and a bouquet. But the chorus wants spice, and I'll have to have it. If you won't write for the people, the people won't have anything to say to me. It's all jolly fine to be a gentleman, and to say you won't.—What is it? Pollute your pen with spice? But if I'm to keep my engagement at the Arcadia I must sing spice, and that's all about it.'

Dick made no reply. They went on together in the rain and fog of the November night until they reached Leadenhall Street; here they turned down, and after proceeding some distance, they entered a narrow, lampless alley, and stopped at the door of one of those grimy little old London City houses which defy, with unaccountable pertinacity, the sweeping operations of the modern edile.

Dick entered with a latchkey, and one step took them into a shabby little room filled with a fog of strong tobacco smoke. The author of this was a tall, powerful man with a bad, handsome face, on which was stamped gipsy as plain as could be. He was lying at full length on a decayed sofa, a clay pipe in his mouth, and a tumbler of hot mixture at his elbow.

'Hullo!' said Dick, 'you're here, are you?'

'Yes, I'm here,' growled the man. 'I suppose you don't object to your wife's father being here?'

'Precious little good objecting,' said Dick. 'What do you want?'

'Just to keep an eye on you, that's all,' replied the man. 'I suppose you've been havin' a blow-out in Portland Place. Did you get anything out of the "old geeser"?'

'I don't understand you. Who's the "old geeser"?'

'Why, your precious uncle. Did he come down with the dollars?'

'Of course not. Why should he?'

'Why should he?' repeated the man almost fiercely, as he got up from the sofa—'why shouldn't he? That's the tip. Look here, Mr Marsden. I reckon it's about time we came to some understanding.'

'All right! We'll see to that,' said Dick, who perceived his father-in-law to be in an aggressive mood. 'Suppose you go home and leave me to my—my home.'

Home? Home, indeed! Well worthy of the accent of disgust and despair which the young man threw into his pronunciation of the word.

'Not till I have an understanding,' was the reply.

'Yes, yes; go away, father,' said Mrs Marsden, who was trying to toast a bloater at the half-expired fire. She had taken off her hat and ulster, and was revealed as a tall, fine young woman, with a true Romany face, which in itself was strikingly handsome, but upon which the tale of her wretched life as a low-class music hall singer was being rapidly told. 'Go home. I'll see about it.'

'Not you. You're a fool, and he's a knave. Thought it was a fine thing to marry a gentleman, you did. Talked about your brougham and your villa on the Thames, and all the rest of it; and what's it all amount to? That you've gone and married a gentleman who has to write for his bread-and-butter; who can't afford to keep you as the poorest tradesman in the parish keeps his wife, although he has a rich uncle, and do go aguzzling in Portland Place every Thursday. Strikes me if I was to go to Portland Place and say who I was, there'd be something done; it do.'

Dick Marsden took some rousing, but, like most men of the kind, when roused, meant what he said and did what he threatened. 'Are you going away?' he asked quietly.

His wife's father reseated himself on the sofa by way of reply.

'I think, Mr Hearn, you had better go,' said Dick, very quietly—so quietly, that a gentleman would have understood him to mean what he said.

'S'pose I don't choose to leave my child's house,' said Hearn.

'Your child's house! My house, you mean,' replied Dick.

'Do you pay all the rent for it? Did your money buy this whisky? Haven't you never borrowed money of her hard earnings? Your house!' sneered the gipsy.

The words went home; for Dick knew very well that for singing comic songs at the Arcadia his wife could get as much in a month as he could make in three out of his work for the *Hemisphere* and other journals.

'Besides,' continued Hearn, 'I'm short o' cash.'

'Well, I can't help you,' said Dick.

'Then what's the use of going to dine'—began Hearn, but was interrupted by Dick, whose blood was up.

'My house or not,' he said, 'it's my home, and I want you out of it. Come!'

The big man did not stir. Dick, although not

so largely built, had not been through the athletic training of a public school for nothing; and if his miserable life was telling its tale on his appearance, on his muscles and wind, he was still a formidable antagonist for a bloated, lazy, dissipated man, no matter of what size. So he quietly lifted Mr Hearn up by the collar of his coat, despite his struggles, until he was on his feet, and then ran him along to the door, shot him out into the lane, and slammed the door in his face, all in less than a couple of minutes. 'I'll serve him like that every time he comes here in that condition,' said Dick, lighting his pipe. 'It's becoming intolerable. When I married you, I didn't bargain for your father.'

'And as little did I think when I married you,' retorted the girl fiercely between the mouthfuls of her bloater, 'what I was doing. When you came sniggering and smiling about me, and called me your gipsy queen, and swore you couldn't sleep for thinking of me'—

'I was a young fool,' put in Dick.

'I thought I was in for a good thing. I had lots of other offers of marriage; but you had the gift of the gab, and'—

'Why, you made me marry you!' interposed her husband. 'You threatened me with an action if I didn't. I never said I was rich, or ever should be rich.'

'No; but I knew you would be,' said the girl.

'Yes; that's the whole thing in a nutshell,' said Dick. 'Money! money! money! You've had all I ever had, and you get it now, and how it goes I don't know.'

'Well, I owe a lot now,' said the girl.

'Owe money! What for?'

'Cards.'

'You owe money for cards! Shameful! Who do you play with?'

'The other girls at the hall and their friends sometimes. With father's friends sometimes. He's hard hit too; that's why he's so down to-night.'

'Very pretty indeed! And you expect me to pay your dirty card-sharpping friends what you owe them? Why, if I had the money, I wouldn't pay it. And pray, what are you going to do?'

'I don't know. I've thought of going to your uncle and of telling him everything; that's what father wants to do.'

'Then it would be the very worst day's work you ever did in your life. My uncle knows and suspects nothing of my marriage. If he had the faintest idea that I was married, and married to a music hall singer, I think it would kill him.'

'All the better for us,' remarked the hardened, desperate girl.

'I'm ashamed of you,' said her husband. 'It would kill him, but not before he had deprived me of every penny he would have left me. Not that I care for his money; it won't bring happiness, and I have no debts; but I wouldn't do the dear old man such harm.'

'Dear old fiddlestick!' said Leah contemptuously; 'as if an old bachelor like him didn't know a trick or two. Didn't you say he was going to the south of France soon?'

'Yes; he goes on Monday; and as I'm going

to see him off, I shan't be home till later than usual.'

'And he'll be away for the rest of the winter?'

'Yes.'

'And that great lovely house shut up because there's nobody but fat, lazy servants to live in it, and we're obliged to pig it in two miserable rooms in a back lane! Oh, how I wish I was rich!'

'If you were rich to-morrow, you'd be a pauper before your next birthday,' said her husband bitterly.

Leah made no reply, but sat close in to the poor fire, her face darkened by a pensive frown which was almost terrible, one hand supporting her chin, the other clutching the arm of the chair until the knuckles stood out like knobs of ivory. For almost an hour she remained thus motionless. When she turned round, her husband was fast asleep on the sofa. She rose noiselessly, put on her hat and ulster, paused at the door for a moment, as if agitated by a doubt, and then went out into the darkness.

Dick was a sound sleeper despite his woes, and often preferred to pass the night on the sofa to sleeping in the stuffy garret up-stairs; so that if he awoke and missed her, he would but think that she had gone up to bed, and would just turn over and continue his sleep.

ABOUT THE DAIRA SANIEH.

THAT portion of the British public which is interested in our relations with Egypt, and therefore also in the question of 'Conversion,' which has been a bone of contention between our Government and that of France, will have often noticed in the newspapers the words 'Daira Sanieh;' but it is to be presumed that only capitalists concerned directly with Egyptian funds, who are not a very numerous class, will in general know what they mean. It is our purpose to explain in a sentence or two their signification, and then to describe, from personal observation, some of the features of one of the great establishments of this institution.

The Daira Sanieh is a financial organisation which was originated in 1863 by the Khedive Ismail with the object of monopolising the sugar production of Egypt for his personal profit. It was founded upon loan capital, which at first accumulated rapidly, but latterly its increase was slow. At one time it was believed to amount to nearly eight millions and three-quarters sterling. The institution is under the direction of three comptrollers—one English, one French, and one native. It has sixteen factories, and hundreds of miles of narrow-gauge railway. It employs during the harvest season about fifteen thousand men in labours connected with the factories; and indirectly gives employment to a much larger number of men, women, and children in the cutting of the sugar-cane and its transportation to the mills. The higher officials are inspectors, superintending engineers, contractors for fellah labour, and mafetishes; these last being the buyers of

the cane from the growers. The contractors and mafetishes are Turks and Egyptians; the inspectors and engineers French, with a few English and Scotch. The land on which the cane is grown belongs chiefly if not entirely to the Khedive's domain: the growers hire it under stringent conditions of keeping it fallow every third year, for the sake of recuperation. As the cane is cut at times which are practically fixed by the mafetishes, and is sold to the Daira Sanieh at its own price, no private mills being allowed, the growers are at the mercy of the comptrollers. But the conditions of purchase appear to be reasonable; and growers who, through favour or bribery of the mafetishes, are able to get their cane to the mills before it spoils, make excellent profits.

The establishment here referred to is that at Baksheesha, eighty-five miles up the river from Cairo. Except where there are temples or other remains of antiquity, the towns and villages on the Nile in Middle and Upper Egypt are remarkably similar in aspect. Over all during the day there is ordinarily the same translucent sky of a blue which may be at one time of a cobalt, at another of an indigo shade, but which is never of that milky hue which in the north we are accustomed to call sky-blue. The line of nummulitic limestone cliffs of yellowish white on the Arabian bank glaring in the sun till they are painful to look at; the river, yellow, green, or glittering colourless according to the point of view; the shapeless mud hovels, with here and there a white-washed, superior house or domed mosque or Coptic church; the clumps of palms over every considerable group of dwellings; the river-banks in the later months of the summer not much raised above the brimming river, but in the spring and winter stretching as long, steep shelves of drying mud—in these features it is needless to say Baksheesha has nothing distinctive. In the town itself there are the usual adjuncts of towns on the Nile: an open space, dotted with vaults, where, as is customary in Egypt, a market is held on Saturdays—a market which indicates too plainly that the peasantry of one of the most fertile countries in the world are among the most impoverished of mankind. The arched brickwork of the old disused vaults has in many cases fallen in, and you have to pick your way gingerly and avoid stepping backwards, lest you should find yourself dropping suddenly into a hole. Twelve piastres (half-a-crown) would buy the whole stock of any of the dealers present. A small heap of beans, a small heap of oranges, a dozen pocket mirrors such as are sold in England at a penny each, a handful of nails, a few of the iron plates which are used for shoeing donkeys, are the usual capital of these rural Rothschilds of Egypt. Such a merely material thing as quantity of goods, however, is of little consequence if only the god Mammon be present and active.

As we leave the market and make our way towards the sugar factory, we see in the fields women who have brought food for their husbands, and are kissing their hands reverently before presenting it. Farther on is a woman seated on the ground churning, by pulling a string attached to a goatskin, suspended from a beam composed of ribs of the palm-leaf, and containing the milk.

Here is a group of children, boys and girls together, paddling in the water of a conduit which runs from the factory to the Bahr Jussuf, the canal which about this place leaves the Nile and conveys fertility to the Faynm. The fellaheen as they work in the fields are surrounded by innumerable birds, chiefly pigeons; crows of a bluish-gray plumage, with the wings and tail bordered with a stripe of dark blue; and most beautiful of all, the graceful white ibis, so called, more elegant than even the swan, though, of course, as being a heron, altogether different. Egypt is the paradise of birds.

The sugar factory at Baksheesha is a large square mass of buildings, in which the materials of the structure of the second great London Exhibition are again turned to account, and is not unpicturesque to look at of an evening, when several hundreds of Arabs are sitting round it in circles waiting for their turn of nocturnal duty. About fifteen hundred men and boys are employed during the season of harvesting and boiling, which lasts from December to March. The railways bringing innumerable trucks of cane; the travelling rods which convey the cane to the four huge sets of steel rollers, each set driven by a large low-pressure steam-engine of the old beam type; the fresh juice rolling from each set in a little brook; the engines pumping this juice into the twenty or thirty vast caldrons, where it is boiled by steam at a high pressure; the pumping of it thence into the defecators, where it is partly purified by being filtered through animal charcoal; the subsequent treatment in the vacuum pans, in the forms and the tanks, and in the centrifugal machines—all these matters of detail, though interesting to observe, may be omitted here, as not being different from those in sugar mills generally.

The character and aptitudes of the Egyptian workman are a subject of much interest. Generally, his physical development is magnificent. In race he is not absolutely homogeneous, but the predominant type of features reminds one of the Mongolian more than any other; but his eyes are by no means oblique. His head is broad and low, and relatively small; his face is round, and his forehead depressed; but in his body he is often a Hercules, a Mercury, an Apollo; and if modern sculptors would get fellaheen for models, they might rival Phidias. But mentally the Egyptian peasant is anything but a Greek. He is slow of perception, and cannot be trusted to act on his own judgment or to work without superintendence. An accident which happened one evening at the works illustrates this and other features of his character. An overlooker of the youths who work at the centrifugal machines let fall a key through a slit in the boarded floor. He opened a trap-door and sent down a youth to get the key. The youth, overpowered by the carbonic acid gas which accumulates in such places, fell and could not rise again. The overlooker sent down another youth with the same result, and then went down himself, and died like his predecessors. This all happened in a minute or two. Here was a chamber of death which would have suited Kemmler. The English superintending engineer was absent at the time; a panic seized the workmen, and serious disaster

was only prevented by his opportune return. His presence of mind soon restored order; but the night was made hideous by the unearthly whooping of a troop of women led by the over-looker's widow, who found an additional vent for their grief by attacking and breaking a considerable number of the windows of the building. The gas was shut off; but the bodies had to lie as they fell, in compliance with the law, till they could be inspected by a doctor next day. When they were buried, no relations came to testify respect for the youths, from the mistaken fear of being held responsible for their deaths. The widow and children three days afterwards found refuge in the house, or hovel, of another workman, the widow, according to Mohammedan custom, accepting the position of additional wife.

An Egyptian sugar factory is not a place to increase one's appetite for sugar. The floors in many parts, but especially near the centrifugal machines, are allowed to get coated with a mixture of treacle and dirt. The workmen trample this mixture continually with their naked, unwashed feet, and then carry the whitened sugar from the machines into the weighing chamber, where it is piled in heaps; and they are not scrupulous to avoid walking over these heaps, but inevitably deposit there some of the slime from their feet. It is better for the imagination not to conceive the history of sugar from the cutting of the cane to the mouth of the consumer. An Egyptian sugar factory is not only in itself a busy place, the work going on day and night, but is the centre of a great system, of far-stretching ramifications of activity. Railways run first to the drying-grounds for the megass—sometimes called the 'massash'—this being the hard fibre of the cane, which having had the juice crushed out, is spread in the sun till it becomes combustible by the evaporation of its remaining moisture. A megass field is like a hayfield, only vast in size, with white crushed cane spread out instead of hay, and hundreds of half-naked olive-skinned fellahs as labourers. The engines and trucks rush about incessantly, for at Baksheesha there are sixteen separate steam-boilers adapted for burning fuel of large bulk and rapid combustion, and each of the sixteen furnaces occupies three men night and day in feeding it. This crowd of men, fetching, carrying, shouting, and cheerfully busy, forms an animated and not unpleasant spectacle. But the fields where the cane is cut are perhaps even more lively. A row of men nearly naked, armed with short, stout, heavy knives, lop off the canes close to the earth, which grow at a distance of from two to six inches from one another. This space is determined by the distance from one another of rings in former canes which have been used for planting, this planting having been done by placing canes horizontally upon the ground. Each ring sends a root into the soil, and from each root springs a cane. If the rings are close, the new canes have little room, and they grow thin and spindle up to a great height, sometimes as much as twelve feet. If the rings of the canes which were used for planting were far apart, the new canes are stout and short, and the joints are consequently close.

Behind the cutters stands a row of binders;

these bind about twenty canes together; and the bundles are carried on the heads of women, youths, and girls to the nearest railway truck, where they are packed and sent to the mills. Among these workers are generally a few overseers with sticks, with which they belabour the idlers; but in order that no laggard may escape, they err on the side of severity. It is to a European a singular and not very pleasant experience to see a creature in the form of a man stand on one side of a path and, as pitilessly as if he were hastening the progress of a file of asses, hit with a stick successively a score of heavily-loaded women and girls as they stagger past him. The ancient Egyptians probably treated the Israelites hardly worse than they treated any of their other slaves, and not very much worse than they now sometimes treat their labourers and servants. It is to be hoped that the suffering classes of Egypt are thick-skinned. Certainly they do not cry out much; they take blows as a matter of course, and do not seem to remember them.

Among the terrors of the harvest-field are the watchmen. These officials have for their badge of office a shouldered musket, whether charged or not, I cannot say, and their principal business appears to be to restrain those fatigued, hungry, and thirsty wretches for whom the fresh juice of the cane is too tempting. The poor fellah or fellaha, toiling and panting under solar rays which pour down upon the head unmoderated by even the slightest 'nimbus' of cloud, spies an opportunity when there is no detective eye, breaks off a few joints of cane, tears them up with teeth which are unmatched for whiteness, soundness, and regularity, and is in a heaven of gratified appetite such as Lucullus, with all his lavishness and cooks and dainties, never entered: his finest iced wine of Falernus was lukewarm ditch-water compared with this cool juice. But the Roman, it is to be presumed, ate his dinners without interruption; whereas, alas! the poor fellah or fellaha is rudely brought back to the cruel side of realities by blows on the head and shoulders. Nevertheless, while these poor people when they come to the harvest are so lean that their ribs and the small bones of their spines are prominent, they generally contrive to go away in a condition of respectable fatness.

When one can avoid seeing the brutality which is never long latent in such a scene, it is indeed pleasant to lie under the shelter of a stack of cane, forgetful of European squeamishness about personal dignity, and munching and sucking in obedience to the promptings of nature. The fresh juice is delicious, satisfying without cloying. Let the chemists account for it as they can, it is digestible and wholesome, even when made into almost the sole article of drink and food. But it must be consumed absolutely fresh. The cane soon turns sour, even when it is sealed at the ends for preservation. While thus sitting crunching and sucking, the kaleidoscope of gray felt skull-caps ('libdehs'), of white turbans, of fezes, of olive-coloured and brown bodies, of glittering cane-knives, of bundles of green cane, of blue-gowned women, of black-eyed children, with its varying and ever delightful groupings, is a subject with which an eye that discovers beauty in form and colour can never weary. We have

plenty of 'Rebekahs at the Well.' Perhaps the subject is inexhaustible; but for novelty, might not the artists give us Ameenah, or Khadija, or Ward-es-shan in the cane-field for once? There would be no historical or sacred interest in the picture; there would only be some very real contemporary toil and suffering, which might be made to touch the heart in a direct way through the pathos of a hard lot, if indeed there were not more fruitful suggestions or incidents in the lives of the women of the British working-classes.

If it be asked why the European officials do not interfere, and try to introduce milder methods of treating the fellaheen, the answer is, that they have no authority over the proprietor of the fields, and that moral influence is impotent on the banks of the Nile. If they had some form of material control, they would still be too much occupied to go out into the fields and inform themselves of what goes on there. With every facility which governmental power could give, it would not be possible to eradicate speedily habits of oppression which seem coeval with the race. In the Baksheesha factory itself I never saw a single blow struck.

The higher officials were three in number—a European engineer, a Syrian contractor, and a Mohammedan Egyptian mafetish. They shared a room, provided with a 'mastaba' or ottoman running all round, and surrounded with windows which, from the elevation of the room, gave a view as from a watch-tower over all the works. Here they smoked together with due Oriental gravity, and with a silence which was seldom interrupted except by the entrance of some engine-driver, Coptic clerk, overlooker, or other official coming for orders. The contractor was introduced to the writer of this sketch in these terms: 'This is Syed Jussuf: he is a Syrian and a Christian: he can talk in seven languages fluently, and overreach you in them all.' After this introduction—not very complimentary, it must be confessed, to the honesty of the one or the intelligence of the other—we became fast friends; and I found Syed Jussuf a very interesting and, for anything I discovered to the contrary, a very upright man. He smiled pleasantly now, though afterwards I saw a glint in his eye, as he glanced covertly at the introducer, which was hardly accordant with his character as a Christian. The mafetish, though now a Mohammedan, and named Ismail, was by descent a Copt, but had changed his profession of faith, and had taken to himself three wives—his motives, according to his late co-religionists, being self-interest and the temptations of polygamy. The first time one exchanges cigarettes with a husband of three contemporaneous wives, one scans him closely. Is he more glad or sad by reason of his, to European notions, peculiar connubial arrangements? What were his motives? Religious conviction, romance, caprice, or mere vanity? Ismail evidently thought no ill of himself, but was as characterless and as commonplace as the laced-up boots and the long paletot which he wore.

On the whole, though an establishment of the Daira Sanieh, or sugar-growing or sugar-harvesting, is not what one would go to Egypt specially to see, still, being there, these things have their interest, and help by the force of contrast. Their

juxtaposition with the monuments of antiquity, with pyramid or sphinx, obelisk or temple, stimulates the imagination, and assists to fill in for it the vast picture of the slow march of civilisation.

THE LAST OF THE PEPLOWS.

By G. B. BURGIN.

MISS MARIA PELOW stood on the stone doorstep in order mournfully to watch the carpenter's assistant unscrew the brass plate which had braved the storms of some five-and-twenty winters, and replace it by a new one bearing a slightly modified legend. Peplow House was still what the humorous local gravedigger, when under the influence of beer, was facetiously accustomed to describe as 'a cemetery for young ladies'; but beneath that ghoulish statement the words 'The Misses Peplow' no longer appeared. Miss Jane Peplow, the elder sister, had basely deserted the flowery paths of scholastic tuition, and would shortly be known as Mrs Barton, the spouse of a benevolent provision-merchant in the town. Miss Maria grieved that the ancient family of Peplow should be disgraced by what, in her prim, old-fashioned 'French of Stratteforde at Bowe,' she was wont to term a 'missalliance.' Miss Jane had indeed made a false step, and, what was worse, had not even evinced a proper shame in doing it.

When the new door-plate was screwed on—every twist of the screws hurt Miss Maria—she entered the passage, went up to Jane's bedroom, and sternly opened the door. Jane, a fair-haired handsome woman of forty-eight—Miss Maria was dark, three years younger, and more aristocratic in appearance, with a not altogether unpleasing suggestion of lavender-like princess—had just emerged from the hands of her bridesmaid, and was radiant in black silk and orange blossoms. 'Enter, Maria,' she said pleasantly. 'I trust you have reconsidered your decision, and will honour my nuptials with your presence.' But she quailed visibly.

Miss Maria sat down. She spoke with an effort. 'If dear papa were alive,' she said frostily, 'as an officer and a gentleman he could not have approved of such a match—such an incongruous mingling with the plebeian throng; it would have broken his heart. We have never before descended to—to combine with butter. Correct me if I err in this statement, Jane.'

Jane dared not. She had often heard the same remark before, but affected to treat it as wholly novel.

'You must be aware that by such a marriage you forfeit all claim to social recognition. Already, the baneful effect of such a descent has made itself felt. Two of the parlour boarders are about to leave. The—the ostensible pretext was Australian tinned meat supplied by Mr Barton. In reality, it was the fact of your entering into a matrimonial alliance with butter, perhaps oleomargarine. Under the circumstances, you cannot expect me to—to extend the hand of cordiality to that—that doubtless worthy person.'

The Peplaws were always wholesale, for the few brief years they dabbled in commerce.'

'You are very proud, Maria,' said Jane sadly. 'Sometimes, I think that there are finer things to do in this world than to devote one's life to the exaction of deference based upon mere family considerations.'

Miss Maria declined to discuss the question. 'Has the hymeneal chariot arrived?' she asked.

Miss Jane hastened to a window and peered out. The old flyman from the *Red Lion* over the way had just affixed a white ribbon to his whip, and was rheumatically climbing up on the box. Then, he flicked his Roman-nosed roan as it lumbered over to Peplow House. The flyman had put on his best coat for the ceremony, and hidden his crooked, unliveried legs in a chastely striped rug, as a tacit concession to the sentiment proper to such an abnormally solemn occasion.

'The—the chariot waits, sister,' she said. Miss Maria would have fainted had Miss Jane called the ancient vehicle a fly.

'Very well,' said Miss Maria. 'Do not think I reproach you, Jane. Better the intellectual refinement of a solitary crust and celibacy than the parvenu plenty of tinned tongue and a husband beneath one in the social scale. I am still left to watch over the family honour.'

Miss Jane hesitated nervously. 'Some day, you may be glad of a husband's sheltering love,' she said gently. 'The struggle has been a hard one, Maria. John'—

'I am not socially conscious of the existence of any individual of that name,' said Miss Maria, primly tying her bonnet strings. 'Officially I am compelled to recognise Mr Barton's existence as your husband; but as "John"—never!'

'Mr Barton,' blushed Jane. 'Mr Barton wishes to know if you will honour him by living with us and giving up the sch—the academy?'

Miss Maria was touched, but called up the family pride to maintain her faltering resolution. 'Jane,' she said in the tones of a female Casabianca—'Jane, do not add to your other indiscretions by seeking to lure me from the path of duty. I do not blame you, Jane. Your confiding nature was no match for the wiles of one versed in the sophistries of the retail provision trade, the questionable morality which covers with an eleemosynary candlestick the doubtful quality of his dubious foreign wines; your innocence of plebeian usages is the best excuse for what you are about to do; but, Jane, much as it pains me to tell you so, Mrs Barton cannot be received within the walls of this academy. You—you understand?'

'I understand,' faltered Jane. 'Of course, Maria, with your stern sense of family duty, it could not be otherwise.'

'No,' said Miss Maria, with Spartan fortitude; 'it could not be otherwise, Jane.' But she crossed over to Jane and kissed her.

'But the—the bills?' timidly suggested Jane.

'When your name was removed from the prospectus and the door-plate of this academy,' said Miss Maria, 'you, naturally, ceased to have any connection with the business details of such an establishment.—The chariot waits. I believe it is customary for the bride to lead the way. As my elder sister, you are doubly entitled to precedence.'

'Oh, sister, I'm so nervous,' faltered Miss Jane, with tears in her china-blue eyes. 'I ought to be so happy, and yet I'm thoroughly miserable.'

Miss Maria shook her iron-gray locks with grim determination, and led the way; but Jane drew back. 'This—this is the first quarrel we have ever had, sister,' she faltered. 'Sister, dear sister, bless me before I go to my new home;' and she flung her arms round Miss Maria's neck and burst into tears.

Miss Maria lost her stony composure for a moment, and blessed the somewhat mature bride. 'I—er—hope you may be happy, Jane. I shall miss you, although you never could maintain discipline in the dormitories.—Now, let us descend. The populace await us.'

The vicar was waiting to receive the party at the church, but even at such an eventful moment his first thoughts were for Miss Maria. Miss Maria motioned him aside with, 'I commit Miss Peplow to your care, Mr Kesterton;' and Mr Kesterton received Miss Jane and led her up to the altar, Miss Maria following behind, and turning off at her own pew, sternly unconscious of the fourteen pupils, who giggled and wept alternately, or dropped surreptitious bags of rice all over the seats.

Mr Barton, a middle-aged, gentlemanly man, hastened to meet the bride. He was supported by a tall, grave, individual named Farmer Stebbins, a mighty producer of mangolds and manures. Miss Maria had played with him in the fields, and sung with him in the choir until she learned from her father that Stebbins was beneath her socially. How could she possibly be on terms of intimacy with a man who supplied milk for her young ladies! Miss Maria recognised him frigidly, and bowed her head in uncompromising prayer. Ordinarily, she patronised Farmer Stebbins with a stately dignity, occasionally so far unbending as to drive out to the farm and pay his accounts. On those occasions, Farmer Stebbins had exhibited a quiet pleasure that so majestic a little lady should honour his poor house by her presence. But he had never before met Miss Maria on terms of social, though temporary, equality like the present.

After the completion of the ceremony, Miss Maria went into the vestry, signed certain documents, and drove home alone under the vigilant protection of her red-nosed charioteer. Nothing but a stern sense of duty enabled her to bear up against Jane's departure. That night, for the first time in her life, she was unable to sleep. Jane had shared the same couch with her for thirty years, and Miss Maria had always slept with one hand thrown protectingly over Jane's head. Presently, she bethought her of a soft hairbrush, with the bristles upward, and placed it on Jane's pillow, but carefully removed it every morning lest Dorcas the housemaid should discover her weakness.

And Jane and her husband waxed happier every day, although the school grew smaller and smaller, until even the romantic yet elderly assistant-governess was dismissed and Miss Maria reigned alone—reigned alone, with a haggard, careworn look which nearly moved Jane to tears as she sat opposite her sister in church every Sunday. And then one day the crash came. Perkins the butcher obtained judgment by

default, put a greasy-looking sheriff's officer 'in possession;' and Miss Maria gave up the struggle as she sat, with folded hands and slightly twitching lips, watching her household gods—her dearest relics—being labelled and ticketed and catalogued, and announced for public sale 'without reserve.'

Miss Maria sternly refused all assistance from 'Trade,' and sat waiting among the ruins of her home. A few small worldly possessions still remained to her, but they were of little value. On the last afternoon which remained to the last of the Peplows in her old home, she wandered about the desolate house, and took a final farewell of all the precious possessions which were henceforth to be scattered among the inhabitants of High Drayton. Then she came back to her own sitting-room, and was rather startled when some one knocked at the door, and the vicar entered.

Miss Maria with a stately courtesy motioned to him to be seated.

The vicar seated himself on a cane-bottomed chair as if it had been a throne, and proceeded to acquaint himself of a somewhat delicate mission. 'You will pardon me for intruding upon you at such a time, Miss Peplow,' he said deferentially; 'but the fact is I have come to ask you a favour.'

Miss Maria smiled. It was the one ray of sunshine in the crash which had shattered her fortunes. She bowed to the vicar, and motioned to him to proceed.

'The truth is,' said the vicar, 'we are in a difficulty, Miss Maria. The matron in charge of Hollibone's Trust has somewhat suddenly gone away, and there is no one to fill her place. It has been pointed out to me that you are accustomed to command, and I have lost not a moment, as I was unaware of your plans, in hastening to place the post at your disposal.'

Miss Maria almost wept, but she was not going to sacrifice the family pride so easily. 'Of course you must consider my position,' she said graciously. 'As a Peplow, I should lose caste by accepting such a post.'

'I have thought of that,' said the vicar; 'but perhaps you will recall the fact that the matron before the last was Lady Castlemaine's niece.'

'A precedent of that sort enables me to accept the post you are good enough to bring to my notice,' said Miss Maria amiably, and feeling that she must break down if the vicar stayed much longer. Here was a way out of her difficulties without relying on the loathsome succour of Trade. She was not aware that Trade in the person of Mr Barton had bought out the matron and hastily disposed of her in order that Miss Maria might be spared the pain of becoming homeless. But then Trade is seldom credited with refinement of this kind, and so Miss Maria never knew who it was that had stepped in to shelter her; which was just as well, or she would have gone out into the rain and have refused to be sheltered.

Trade had pointed out to the vicar that the post was vacant, whereupon that worthy gentleman had at once suggested Miss Maria, if she could be persuaded to stoop to such an appointment. Then Trade had used plain language. 'It's all her wicked pride,' Mr Barton said.

'She's breaking Jane's heart, vicar. I think a little misfortune would do her good; but she's lived a blameless, honourable, hard-working life, and I don't see how she's to strike root elsewhere. If you'll coax her into it, Jane will come and thank you; but we daren't be seen with you, or she'd suspect something.'

The late lamented Hollibone had erected six beautiful little Queen Anne red-brick cottages and an arched dwelling in the centre with a spire on the top. The central dwelling was allotted to the Lady Matron, the six cottages to divers elderly widows and spinsters of the town whom misfortune had overtaken. In return for a small weekly dole, they were expected to attend church twice on Sundays and once on saints' days, to pray for Hollibone as well as their own souls. When they had performed this duty, they were allowed to do as they pleased, but were required to be back in their cottages by eight o'clock every night. The Lady Matron of course could stay out as long as she liked.

That particularly handy man Farmer Stebbins happened to be passing at the time in a very roomy vehicle, and was pleased to place it at Miss Maria's disposal. Whilst Miss Maria's scanty goods and chattels were being removed to the Lady Matron's lodge, the vicar took her back to see his wife, and kept her there until it was dark.

Miss Maria, as the vicar handed her into a cosy brougham, and told his coachman to drive to the lodge, felt that she wanted to cry. She had upheld the family honour under exceptionally trying circumstances. Providence had come to her assistance, or she would have had nowhere to lay her head. She drew the black fur carriage rug round her and shivered, for the autumn night was chill.

When the carriage stopped, Miss Maria got out. 'This way, if you please, ma'am,' said a well-known voice.

'Dorcas!' cried Miss Maria, in surprised tones. 'You here?'

'Yes, if you please, ma'am,' said Dorcas. 'You didn't think I was going to leave you all by yourself, now Miss Jane has gone.'

'But Dorcas,' said Miss Maria gently, as she sank into a chair before the fire, and Dorcas brought out her fur slippers as usual, 'you must be aware that I have met with pecuniary reverses, and am unable to keep a servant.'

Miss Maria had once nursed Dorcas through an illness, and Dorcas—a very pretty, affectionate girl—was ill-bred enough to remember the fact. 'I'm going to be married in a few months, ma'am, to Farmer Stebbins's head man,' she said; 'and the vicar has offered me the lodge-keeper's post here.'

'But where's the lodge?' demanded Miss Maria.

'Here, ma'am,' replied Dorcas. 'My duty is to look after my mistress.—But it's time you had your negus.'

She came back in a few minutes with the negus and a slice of toast cut into strips. Miss Maria, her gown turned back, as was her custom, sat, with her feet on the fender, thoughtfully warming both hands at the cheerful fire. At half-past eight, Dorcas brought in Miss Maria's Bible, and respectfully sat down near the door.

Miss Maria looked round with somewhat blurred eyes. 'Let us thank God for all his mercies,' she said. 'And Dorcas'—

'Yes, ma'am,' quietly returned Dorcas.

'Don't sit over there in the cold, but draw your chair up to the fire.'

Dorcas had made her bed in the little dressing-room next to Miss Maria's chamber. She tucked up Miss Maria very tenderly, and then went back to her own room. Miss Maria was so tired that she fell asleep without thinking of the hairbrush. Then Dorcas stole quietly down-stairs and admitted those shivering half-frozen conspirators, Mr and Mrs Barton.

'How does she take it?' sobbed Jane.

'Like a lamb, ma'am,' replied Dorcas. 'Would you care to have just a peep at her?'

'She would think it a great liberty,' said Jane; but she followed Dorcas softly up-stairs, and knelt by Miss Maria's bed.

Miss Maria's hand wandering unconsciously about in search of the hairbrush, touched Jane's soft hair. She gave a little cry and awoke.

'Jane! Jane!' she cried. 'Dear, dear Jane, where are you?'

'Did you call, miss?' asked Dorcas, quietly presenting herself with a light after Jane had crept away.

Miss Maria sat up in bed wildly. 'Yes, I—I—I must have been dreaming, Dorcas. I thought Jane was here, and that she cried over me.'

'It's the strange room, ma'am,' replied Dorcas, tucking her up again; and again Miss Maria slept.

As the days went by, every one of any importance made a point of calling on Miss Maria. People respected her gallant struggle against overwhelming odds; they wanted to show their respect; and so they called at all hours, from old Lady Castlemaine down to Farmer Stebbins, who had sung in the choir with Miss Maria when they were children. In those days, Miss Maria had patronised Stebbins with a gracious condescension which somewhat overwhelmed him, never forgetting to let him feel that they were separated by an immeasurable gulf. And Stebbins had sighed, and gone about the accumulation of filthy lucre in the shape of manure as the one object of his life. Many a maid had longed for him and sighed in vain; many a matron had lured him into afternoon tea on Sundays, and thrown out mysterious hints that so warm a man ought to marry and settle down. Farmer Stebbins had never married. And now that his idol had seemed to fall from her high estate, he developed a more chivalrous courtesy than before. It is needless to say that he had not worried Miss Maria with bills. Every morning he came personally with a tin can of his best cream for her use; every week he brought eggs and butter to Dorcas; and when Miss Maria gently checked him one morning, he replied that he was sorry to displease her, but that he must obey orders. Miss Maria, thinking that he alluded to the trustees, made no more objections, but, from bowing with gracious condescension, actually invited him into the parlour once a month for five minutes' conversation.

Stebbins was true to her; he had always recognised her social position; and the disparity

in their family was so great that Miss Maria felt she could safely meet him on the neutral ground of their childish experiences without losing caste. Jane never had cared for caste, and was happy; Miss Maria had cared for caste all her life, and was unhappy. She fell into the habit of inquiring about Jane from Stebbins. Jane also asked about Miss Maria from the worthy farmer. Thus an indirect method of communication between the sisters was established. Miss Maria also relied upon Stebbins to help in the onerous duties of her post. To her surprise, she found herself gradually glad to leave most of them in his hands. Her long struggle with the world had tired her mentally and physically. The ruddy-cheeked Stebbins, with his enormous muscular strength and gentle, clumsy ways, exercised a soothing effect upon her nerves. She even discovered from the County Guide that his family had once been the De Stevens, then Destevins, then plain Stebbins. He came of a more honourable and ancient stock than the Peplaws themselves, although his father had never served Her Most Gracious Majesty. Hence, when Stebbins, with many blushes, asked her to take tea at the farm in order to meet Mrs Barton on neutral territory, Miss Maria, after a faint show of resistance, actually consented to do so. For some three or four months—it was now January—she had lived her solitary life, haunted by the fear that Dorcas would marry and leave her.

'You must not waste your life on me, Dorcas,' she said, as she dressed in her best lavender silk for the tea-party. 'I have been selfish in accepting your devotion.—When do you intend to be married?'

'Not before you, ma'am,' said Dorcas quietly, and went away.

Miss Maria started. Poor Dorcas! Then a faint flush dyed her cheek. 'Dorcas, what did you mean by that remark?' she asked, when Dorcas returned with her best cap.

'What I said, ma'am,' answered Dorcas, carefully putting the cap in the box. 'Shall I bring a lantern to light us on the way back?'

It was a clear, frosty afternoon. A robin twittered faint make-believe music on a bare branch outside the window. Miss Maria listened to the bird for a moment, and then drew on her gloves. When she went down-stairs, another surprise awaited her in the shape of the *Red Lion* chariot. 'What do you want?' she inquired somewhat sharply of the red-nosed Jehu.

Jehu was a man of few words. 'You, mum,' he stolidly answered.

'What for?' inquired Miss Maria.

'Stebbinses,' said Jehu woodenly.

'But, my good man, I didn't order you to come,' said Miss Maria.

Jehu flicked an imaginary fly from the venerable ruin in the shafts, but made no answer.

'Go home,' said Miss Maria. 'I shall walk.'

She went down the path, followed by Dorcas and the chariot. When she looked round, Jehu still followed at a snail's pace.

'Didn't you hear me?' asked Miss Maria.

'Where are you going?'

'Stebbinses,' said Jehu.

'I think we'd better get in, ma'am,' suggested Dorcas. 'He'll go there all the same.'

Miss Maria got in, mentally deciding that she had yielded only to *force majeure*.

Jehu touched his hat when she got out of the chariot. 'Nine o'clock, mum?' he asked.

'Yes,' said Miss Maria, taken by surprise; and the chariot rumbled away, each wheel looking as if it wanted to go to a different point of the compass.

Stebbins was at the hall-door to receive them. Miss Maria thought that he had never shown to so much advantage. All his natural timidity had vanished. He was the quiet, courteous host, full of homely cordiality and good feeling. His housekeeper took Miss Maria up-stairs to remove her bonnet. There was a cosy fire in the best bedroom. Suddenly, Miss Maria—the housekeeper had gone down—fell on her knees by the side of the bed and began to cry softly, utterly regardless of the fact that she was crushing her best cap beyond redemption. She moved from one familiar piece of furniture to another—furniture which she had thought never to see again. There it all was—the old familiar mahogany bedstead, the little bookcase by its side, the ancient bureau, the vast clothes-press, the faded carpet, the painting of her father on the wall, the needlework sampler which had bidden contemptuous defiance to all well-known laws of ornithology and botany for so many years; nay, even the paper was the same pattern, although fresher and newer. And the room had been partitioned off to exactly the same size as her old apartment at Peplow House. There was even an old-fashioned pin-cushion on the dressing-table—no one knew how sorely she missed that pin-cushion—just as it had stood for years at Peplow House.

Before she had recovered from her surprise, the housekeeper again knocked at the door. Miss Maria hastily busied herself with her cap. 'Does any one use this room?' she asked.

'No, ma'am.'

'Has any one ever used it?'

'No, ma'am.'

Then she went down-stairs, and was not surprised to find herself back at the Peplow House drawing-room again.

Stebbins came forward to meet Miss Maria with quiet deference, and led her to a chair—her chair—by the fire. She could not speak.

Stebbins gave her time to recover herself. 'How can I thank you?' asked Miss Maria.

'If it gives you pleasure,' he said, in his simple honest way—'if it gives you pleasure, Miss Maria, it is the only excuse I have for doing it. I didn't like to think of your missing the things.'

'But don't you see,' she said, 'you—you make it harder for me to go back?'

'Don't go back. I'll go away, if you care to stay here.'

'What, John!' His name slipped from her lips unconsciously. She had not called him 'John' for five-and-twenty years. 'Give up your home for me!'

'Yes,' he said simply. 'Why not?'

Miss Maria's feeble edifice of family pride tottered and crumbled away like a house of cards. 'John,' she said softly, 'I have spent my whole life in pursuit of shadows. You shame me, John.'

He led her back to her chair, whence she had

risen under the influence of strong emotion. 'I only want to see you happy,' he said. 'I could think of no other way than to preserve the things you love. They—they comforted me.'

'Comforted you?'

'Yes.'

'Have you—have you any sorrow?' hesitatingly inquired Miss Maria.

'Yes,' said John; 'ever since I can remember anything, it has been with me.'

Then a light flashed upon Miss Maria. This man had loved her all his life. She had made a barrier between them which was insurmountable. He had watched over her, cherished her, loved her, only to be repaid by condescending impertinence and patronage. Even now, he was too noble to be revenged, too magnanimous to crush her as she deserved. His sole thought had been for her happiness, for her well-being.

For a moment, they stood looking into each other's eyes. The woman's fell. She moved blindly towards the door. Most men would have taken advantage of her helplessness. This man would not speak even now. Suddenly, she came back and held out her hand.

'Will you forgive me?' she asked. 'I have treated you very cruelly, very unworthily. I only see my own meanness through my tears. Had I found this out years ago, when I was younger and unbroken by the world, I—I should have acted differently.'

Stebbins stood as one dazed; but she came nearer still, her thin, white hands clasped together. 'I am so sorry,' she said—'so very, very sorry. Oh, if our lives could come over again. Now, I am broken and old and worn, with no one to love me, no one to care, no one to remove the barriers which my hideous pride has raised around me. I have wasted my life—and yours! Forgive me!'

Stebbins raised her up. 'You are the only woman in the world for me,' he said. 'I've loved you since we sat in the choir and our voices mingled together. You made my heaven then. Will you make it again?'

She crept into the shelter of his strong arms. 'You are so strong,' she sobbed, and laid her head upon his breast.

TO SPRING.

SWEET Spring! with shy, soft eyes of heavenly blue!
The wild winds whispered: 'She is coming here!'
And laughed aloud for joy: gray skies grew clear;
The violet woke up to welcome you.
The wan gold primroses all wet with dew,
Along the mossy margin of the mere,
Shone out in starry clusters, and anear,
A tangle of white bloom, the wildfire grew.
Now you have come. I hear in murmuring streams
Your musical low laugh, as silvery sweet
As the lark's singing in his rapturous dreams.
Where violets are thickest, there your feet
Have lately passed. I see your azure eyes
Smile in forget-me-nots and radiant skies.

ALICE FURLONG.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

How far thought is affected by food, is Food for Thought. What impoverished, over-stimulated, or beclouded brains, an indulgence in too spare or too liberal a diet may produce, is a question of no small importance. Without expressing any opinion as to the use or abuse of alcoholic drinks—or even conceding, wholly, Samuel Taylor Coleridge's dictum, that only a pure mind can relish apple dumplings—we feel but little doubt that Coleridge himself would scarcely have merited his friend's description of him as a 'damaged archangel' but for his over-indulgence in a brain-beclouding drug. Milk is for babes, and strong meat for those who can digest it; but a man who takes a drug for his friend often entertains a demon unawares, who may any day desert him, and mock the double dose that only brings twice-cursed discomfort. But, argues the man, life is not worth living without this or that pet indulgence. This is the old story of the struggle, the temptation, and the yielding—of Faust and Mephistopheles. 'You are sleepless—in pain, grief, loneliness, or any other affliction; take me and I will give you rest—make your life bearable at least,' avers the patented poison, cunningly disguised perhaps as a much testimonialised medicine. And lulled by the apparent relief, the temporary forgetfulness, the victim hugs and praises the traitor to whom he has given admission.

This remedy, this panacea, will last his lifetime—so he fancies. But no such thing. In the hour of his utmost need, when sickness or sorrow has newly shaken his constitution, suddenly and without warning the dose has lost its cunning power to soothe or stupefy; it will neither ward off nor sweeten painful hours again.

And now begins a conflict dreadful to witness, horrible to endure—an inevitable time of woe, compared with which, the man's state, when he ignorantly said life was not worth living without his darling indulgence, was, as he now remorsefully owns, a paradise. He thought to indulge, and die—but as a matter of fact there are years

of painful life, with ruined digestion, irritable nerves, sleepless eyes, between him and dissolution. Retribution—so inexorable a law in all Nature's dealings with man—sums up painfully, slowly, hourly, day by day, every wrong he has inflicted on the machine she entrusted to him; wrongs inflicted ignorantly or wilfully; it makes no difference physically, however much it may morally; a final account has to be given of all his doings.

But it is not merely self-inflicted torments we have to reckon with: the British householder has his every day's dinner to digest—if he can. In temperate-climbed Britain we have not to dread the rash humour, produced by the pungent pickles and brandy pawnee in the brain of the Anglo-Indian; nor the affected indifference and faded sneer of the habitual absinthe toper; nor the dyspepsia resulting from the iced water and semipiternal pie of our American cousins. Although every housekeeper knows the ease with which a pie can be concocted, and how 'satisfying' it is, we have so far profited by lessons on health and cookery as nearly to have banished from our tables that awful 'resurrection pie' of our school-tide, in which did not disdain to reappear every bone that had figured on the table during the week—not even excepting the 'whiskers' of the harmless necessary herring. But if this horror of a pie has vanished, our cold domestic mutton, or still more unalluring 'hash,' remains behind. The viands which a stuffy used-up atmosphere has ill prepared the appetite and faded eyes of a sedentary worker to regard with relish, would appear, as we all know, in a very different light if spread on the table of a country inn, and encountered after a fast of five hours, with eyes brightened and lungs cleared by ten miles of rough walking over heath or moor.

The indoor worker is as hungry—as much in need of sustenance as the outdoor; he may be no more dainty or self-indulgent than his more fortunate compeer; but as he brings but a languid appetite to his cold mutton, so he probably carries from it an uneasy digestion that calls—or he

fancies that it does—for some cordial corrective to give tone and zest to what he has half-mechanically swallowed. Meanwhile, in the case of the open-air diner, digestion follows without the need of recourse to any stimulant beyond the primeval sauce of hunger which he has brought to his repast. That there is a subtle and intimate correlation between food and brain, all pathologists agree. Without being materialists, or seeking to trace all mental effects to mere physical action and reaction, we yet regard it of the greatest consequence that the vehicle of thought should be nourished and invigorated by the food, so that a man may think his thoughts with all the keenness and perspicacity of which nature has rendered him capable. That men of genius have done much, often with small means and appliances, is no proof that they might not have done more had their environments been more propitious. Granting a preponderating influence to original or inherited temperament—a temperament, however, susceptible of daily alteration—improvement, or the reverse—every meal demands a certain amount of importance. This may be seen especially in the case of growing lads whose appetites are of the keenest. Some happy temperaments there are which feel neither disappointment nor disgust at the aspect of the typical cold mutton; but these are not common; and as a state of temper always renders digestion difficult, the failure to provide an appetising as well as a merely wholesome meal may have far-reaching consequences.

Do our readers remember the exquisitely humorous look of affected recollection which *paterfamilias* assumes in one of John Leech's sketches, when, leaving the house, he pauses at the hall door, and learns the *menu* for the day from the neat little parlour-maid? Then comes the sudden remembrance of an engagement that will keep him from home beyond the dinner hour, and the message to the mistress on no account to wait dinner for him! We can all imagine the secret glee with which he will order and the gusto with which he will absorb his own especially soothing dish at his club; while the lady of his hearth and home is dispersing the domestic cold mutton among the children and servants. He will return home, we foresee, good-tempered, well nourished, generously inclined even, possibly with some little gift in hand for the wife of whose company he has deprived himself out of pure regard for his own digestion and her feelings.

If Shakespeare's Adam was justified in attributing his frosty but kindly old age to his abstention from 'hot and rebellious liquors' in his youth, how many men and women may owe an old age of dyspepsia, unkindly and frosty, to a blighting unwholesome diet in their youth! We know how attractive to young and innocent palates is pastry in all its various shapes and forms; how repugnant to palates on which the mother's milk is scarce dry is meat—underdone, fat meat, 'juicy' chops and steaks! But it is not the young alone who eling to puff paste and short crust; their elders, careless and fearless, will also commit similar excesses until arrested by the pangs of dyspepsia.

Grumio denied mustard to his mistress on the ground that it was too hot for her temperament. But he also denied to her, as quite inadmissible, beef without that choleric condiment. It was, we believe, the elder Mathews, who, watching a traveller dining at an inn upon beefsteak and neglecting to help himself to mustard, first gently pointed out to him the omission, and then, shocked and outraged at the diner's culpable and continued indifference on so vital a point, ended by himself putting mustard on the edge of the recalcitrant feeder's plate, in hopes of coaxing or coercing him into orthodoxy.

In one of his amusing paradoxes, Mr Ruskin advises a young man to be first happy, and then useful afterwards; since by being happy he would prove that he was, or was doing, that which Providence intended him to be, or do. May we argue in like manner that we do well to feed on that which likes us, since the pleasure to our palate proves we are eating what nature intended us to eat? That this doctrine has its practical limitations is obvious at a glance—a glance, we mean, at the countenances of those who, following strictly, if unconsciously, the moralist's advice, seek first to gratify their tastes without paying much regard to the usefulness of their diet for health and strength. Experience must decide here, as elsewhere, what amount of indulgence we may harmlessly accord to the preferences which nature has implanted in us—no less than in the cream- and fish-loving cat, the honey-loving bear, the salt-desiring reindeer. Preferences, due in the first instance, perhaps, to necessity or accident, become riveted on races as on individuals by custom and inheritance. Thus, the Chinaman yields to a craving for opium; and the tea-plant helps to moderate the potations which were the disgrace of an earlier part of this century. Fashion goes for a good deal in eating and drinking, as well as clothing; and those who, out of regard for their brains, prefer to keep themselves well nourished, not by high but by good living, rather 'than paint their outward walls so costly gay,' and suffer dearth within, have the satisfaction of knowing by experience that they have enabled the machine to do the best work its nature allows of—have given it power to grasp and retain those thoughts and ideas which are, we humbly hope, to have a longer lease than the fading mansion in which they have been temporarily enshrined.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XII.—A PRODIGAL FATHER.

Down the noisome lane, or alley, Isabel and Mr Doughty passed in the rear of the policeman. It was so narrow and so dark that they thought it well to keep in the middle of the way; and yet they scarce avoided contact with dingy figures that flitted past them in and out of gaping doorways, and with children that squalled and scrambled in the gutters; for in that dreadful region night and day were confounded even for the youngest. At the end of the alley was a dark little square, and to a tumble-down house at the farther side the policeman led, and they followed. The door-

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way was below the level of the street, and was approached by a flight of half-a-dozen steps, worn very much away by the tread and scuffle of countless feet. Into this den or cave they descended; and now at a suggestion Isabel would have turned back, for these squalid surroundings had dispelled the romance of opium-smoking, and the horrid expectation of what she might see oppressed and terrified her. But neither of her companions said a word, and she went on with them as if without hesitation—on to a door on one side of the dark passage, above which hung a small paraffin lamp, smoking and stinking. The policeman lifted the latch and opened the door, and then stood aside for the others to enter. Isabel drew back.

‘I think,’ said she, ‘I will wait here.’

‘I will go in,’ said Mr Doughty, ‘and find him, and discover what there is to pay.’

He entered, and Isabel and the policeman remained together by the door. They had a full view of the long low room, the atmosphere of which was thick with the brown and sickly opium smoke. A heavy silence prevailed, but yet Isabel was instinctively aware that there were many men in the awful place. No lamp illumined the gloom—nothing save a lurid glow proceeding from a raised brazier of charcoal at the farther end, and points of light here and there, which were alternately bright and dull, and which when bright made little halos in the dense, smoky atmosphere. As her eyes became used to the peculiar gloom she made out wooden bunks ranged above each other against the wall, like the berths of a ship, and in the bunks she dimly descried strange figures disposed fantastically as on beds of languid torture. Now and then she heard murmurs of uncouth speech, which rose heavily from the silence, and slowly sank back into silence again.

Meanwhile Mr Doughty had made his way down the den. He was met midway by a bowing and gesticulating Chinaman, to whom he seemed to explain his purpose, and with whom he moved towards the brazier. There they stopped, looming large and shadowy against it; after a moment or two the Chinaman returned alone down the room. Then it seemed to Isabel as if a face sprang out of the darkness around the brazier. Close against it, steeped in the glow of the charcoal, she saw the grizzled head of a man with thin nose and lank, close-shaven jaw; the man sat with his chin in his hands gazing into the fire, but presently he raised his head with his face half-turned towards the door to look at Mr Doughty, who stood on the other side of the brazier, and then Isabel's heart rose and sank, for she was sure she saw her father. At that moment the Chinaman appeared through the haze immediately before her. He bowed, and he smiled with an expansive, all-embracing friendliness; but there was an expression in his slanting eyes which made Isabel shudder.

‘It is my own fault,’ she said to herself: ‘I should not have come here.’

The policeman, however, came to her relief. ‘Quick, Johnny, quick,’ said he; and the Chinaman turned away, smiling and bowing still, and moved noiselessly back to the brazier.

In a moment or two Mr Doughty came back, and said the Chinaman's demand was for so much—naming a sum which seemed extravagant even for three days' unremitting consumption of his seductive poison—but that, with Miss Raynor's permission, he would give him so much less.

‘Give him what he asks for,’ said Isabel, putting her purse into Mr Doughty's hand, ‘and let us get away.’

Mr Doughty's look of mingled surprise and conscious worth at having untold money entrusted to him was good to see. ‘I will accomplish,’ said he, ‘the business with expedition.’

He hurried away; and soon returned, leading by the arm a lean, haggard man, with hair and dress disordered and creased, pale with the pasty pallor of the Chinaman, loose-lipped, and with every nerve twitching in reaction from the prolonged effect of the drug. He seemed but half-conscious, and he walked sadly and shamblingly with his eyes on the ground.

Isabel leaned back, as if she would faint, against the door-post. She experienced such bitter disappointment and piercing of heart as she had never before known. Was this pitiable creature her father?—whom she had dreamed of comforting and cheering, and upon whom she had been ready to pour out all her affection? Did he know that his daughter was there, waiting for him?—the girl whom he had let slip from care and ken for more than twenty years? Perhaps he did not yet know, nor fully comprehend. She found herself thinking it would be well that it should be so. She shrank from embracing, even from touching him. She was filled with shame for him, and yet she was ashamed of her shame.

In this turbulent state of emotion she scarcely noticed that he was being hurried up the lane, by Mr Doughty on one side and the policeman on the other, and that she herself was hastening after them, away from that hideous Inferno, whose stifling fumes seemed still creeping and writhing about her.

They found the cab waiting for them where they had left it. Mr Doughty opened the door and helped his chief to enter. Then he turned to Miss Raynor. ‘Miss Raynor,’ said he, in a low but impressive voice, ‘you see him at his worst—his very worst: you must not judge of him as you see him now.’

‘No,’ said she, stung somewhat with her former jealousy that a stranger should know more of her father than she knew; ‘I must not—I do not. You have my purse, Mr Doughty: will you give the policeman something for his kindness?’ Then turning to the policeman, she said, ‘Thank you very much,’ and entered the cab, and sat down opposite her father.

Mr Doughty did as she requested. Then, closing the cab-door without a word, he mounted

again beside the driver. Isabel felt curiously grateful for so small a matter, and was in some sense cheered by it. She was compelled to see that these delicate turns of behaviour which are taken to mark a gentleman were still possible even to so poor and saddened a creature as Mr Doughty, and she therefore was inclined to be hopeful about her father. Moreover, she considered and said to herself: 'There must, after all, be something good and attractive about him even for poor Mr Doughty to have remained attached and faithful friend these many years.' All which is significant evidence of the prostrate condition to which her feelings and hopes had been reduced by the sight of her father.

They had not driven very far—Isabel on one seat and her father leaning back in the corner of the other—and she was wondering whether he was not asleep, when he suddenly threw himself forward with his face in his hands and his elbows resting on his knees and sobbed aloud. Upon that the imprisoned founts of feeling in Isabel's generous breast burst forth and swept away all doubt and speculation; she became simply a large-hearted woman and a daughter aware that there before her was a man, her father, needing pity and consolation.

'Father!' she cried, and sank on her knees before him. 'Don't! Don't! I'm here!' She took one of his hands, which he yielded to her, and she put her arm about him.

'Rise, rise!' he said, in a sharp treble of agony. 'It is I should be there!'

She yielded to his insistent hand, and sat beside him.

'Don't speak to me,' said he; 'let me look at you. You are like your mother—poor mother!—but stronger—much stronger. How does it happen?'

Isabel looked at him, and for the first time met his eye: there was a light in it which belied the haggard debauchery of the countenance, and which at once made her feel that she was not the chief person there. She was relieved and soothed: she was now certain that her father was not a saddened brute; that, much and terribly though he might have tried, tortured, and debased his body, his intellect and soul still shone clear through all. He leaned back again, looking at her and dreaming, and she sat content (comparatively), and still held his hand, in spite of its nervous twitching, pleased to find it warm and of a beautiful shape. They said no further word to each other till the cab stopped and Mr Doughty came to the door. This time it was Isabel that helped her father. He took her arm out of the cab and into the lodging, which was on the ground-floor of one of the houses of Norfolk Street.

Seeing that Mr Doughty had not followed them in, and hearing voices without for some instants in tolerably loud debate, Isabel—who feared the cabman was in process of being dismissed, and who, moreover, now felt herself responsible for her father and his friend—went to the door.

'I had intended,' she heard Mr Doughty say in portentous tones to the cabman—'I had intended to bestow upon you a considerable honorarium; but, considering the suggestions you have rudely urged concerning this adorable and angelic young lady, I shall not bestow it.'

'But, at least, sir,' said the cabman—who was evidently very civil, as cabmen go—'I hope you won't go and forget the half-pint of Scotch I got.'

'Hush!' said Mr Doughty. 'I will not.'

'Mr Doughty,' called she, 'don't send the cab away: I shall want it to take me home presently. Ask the cabman to wait, please.'

'All right, miss,' the cabman answered for himself.

Isabel was returning to her father, when she heard the voice of Mr Doughty calling her. She waited; and he came to her with business-like air.

'One moment, Miss Raynor,' said he. 'I beg to resign the trust you confided to me'—and he handed back her purse. 'The disbursements—of which I have made a note on this morsel of paper—cover Johnny Chinaman's charges and the cab fare up till now, together with a shilling which I ventured to borrow to furnish some slight refreshment for the cabman and myself. Did I do wrong?'

'Oh no,' said Isabel; and she secretly thought well of him for his confession that he had 'borrowed.'—'But,' she added, 'you must take charge of a little money for my father. He ought, by the way, to eat something at once. I suppose he has not had much food at the Chinaman's these three days?'

'Food, Miss Raynor?' said Mr Doughty. 'The only food supplied or demanded in that Hades is opium! And the chief would not taste solid food at present if he had it.'

'And the shops are all closed!' she exclaimed. She was thinking that she might have bought some soup for him; but nothing could be done now; and she reflected that, after all, he was probably no worse off than he had been many a time before after he had been sated with his drug. It was inevitable he should wait for her provision, but she would ensure that his wants should be properly supplied next day. 'I suppose,' said she, 'that you have nothing in the house that could be easily got ready?'

'I do not know, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty; 'but I am tolerably sure there is not. Food, Miss Raynor, is not our strong point in this house.'

'I suspected as much; but,' said she, with good sense, 'it is with neglecting your food that you foolish men confirm your dreadful habits.'

'You are right, Miss Raynor. We weak male mortals go completely wrong when we have not the clear head and the strong heart of the better sex with us.'

'Compliments again, Mr Doughty,' said Isabel.

'Simple truth, I assure you,' said Mr Doughty.—'And now, Miss Raynor, will you permit me to say that I think it wise of you not to propose to hold much conversation with your father now. Apart from the fact that it is very nearly midnight, the chief is at this present time in his very lowest condition. I would offer to escort you to your—ahem—abode, but I do not think it would be well to leave the chief alone as he is.'

'What?' said Isabel. 'He would not try, surely, to go back to that dreadful place?'

'No,' said Mr Doughty; 'not that. But he might try to lay violent hands on himself.—But,

pray, do not be alarmed. I know his ways, and I will look after him. He sleeps little, but I sleep less, and on these particular occasions I keep a special watch upon him.'

Isabel hesitated; for these words of Mr Doughty brought back doubts and fears. Ought she to stay with her father?—to soothe and strengthen him, if so be she might? It was characteristic of her frank independence and her lack of self-consciousness not to view this at all as a question of propriety with regard to herself. She entered the little sitting-room, determined to let herself be decided by what her father might chance to say. He was reclining limp in an easy-chair—the comfortless, casterless easy-chair of the London lodging-house—apparently in a state of apathy. His eyes found her, however, as soon as she entered.

'Don't take your things off,' said he—she was only undoing a button or two of her jacket. 'You must not stay here: this place is not fit for you.'

'I will go,' said Mr Doughty, 'and interview our landlady;' and he discreetly withdrew.

'I do not propose to stay, father,' said Isabel, going nearer to him. 'I have lodgings of my own.'

'Don't come near me at present, my child,' said he. 'Sit there, and let me look at you. I am glad you have rooms of your own—but not in this house, I hope—not in this house. It is a dreadful house.' He kept his eyes sadly and wistfully fixed on her. 'You have come to me as an angel of God, my dear. I do not ask you now how you found me: we will talk of that and other things by-and-by. I cannot talk of anything now: I—I am not well enough.'

'Promise me, father,' said she, leaning towards him, 'that you will take some food at once?'

'Food? I need no food now, my child. It is meat and drink to look on you. I have often longed to see you—to see how the poor baby that they took from me was grown.'

'My poor father!' she cried, and before he could hinder her, she was on her knees beside him.

'And you are my daughter!' said he, still gazing at her wistfully and half-absently. 'You are very beautiful, my dear—far more beautiful than I could have imagined you to be.'

'Don't say these things, father,' said Isabel, blushing, but pleased.

'It is a good thing to be beautiful, and it is good to know it. The chances are that a truly beautiful woman has a beautiful nature: there is no kind of doubt of that with you.' Then he let his chin drop on his breast and fixed his eyes on vacancy as he murmured:

'I remember one that perished; sweetly did she speak and move;
Such an one do I remember—'

I cannot talk now: I am tired: I am not quite well.' He roused himself a little and said: 'Come and see me to-morrow if you can. Yes; come, and I'll talk with you.'

His chin dropped again on his breast and his eyes closed. He seemed to slide away into sleep; and after a minute or two Isabel rose and quietly went out. She found Mr Doughty waiting at the outer door to see her into her cab. She told

him she would visit her father early next evening, gave him a kindly adieu, and was driven away as the clocks of Islington reproachfully tolled her out the hour of twelve.

THE MANUFACTURE OF ARSENIC.

THE utilisation of waste is one of the great lessons we are learning at the close of the nineteenth century. What our fathers and grandfathers threw away, that we find profitable to work for something it contains which was unknown or disregarded by them, or which has since acquired a new value. This is notably the case with the arsenical pyrites, or mundic, turned out in vast quantities from the copper mines in Devon and Cornwall, principally on both banks of the Tamar. At one time, these mines, rich in copper, were worked vigorously for that metal, and the mundic was cast away, forming enormous 'ramps,' as they are locally termed, or mounds of this waste. After a while the price of copper declined and the richness of the lodes became less. Simultaneously a demand sprang up for arsenic, and now the old copper mines are worked, not exclusively but mainly for arsenic. The cost of production is of course greatly reduced by the fact that enormous quantities had been brought up from underground, and had been thrown out under the previous system, and these waste heaps were now reworked for the sake of the arsenic. Formerly, 'arsenic soot' was sold from half-a-crown to fifteen shillings a ton; now its price ranges from seven pounds to seven pounds ten shillings.

The value of arsenic as something other than a poison or a pigment is of recent discovery. In ancient classic times, the beauty of orpiment, the yellow sulphide, was known, but not realgo, the disulphate of arsenic, which is of a ruby colour. Arsenic as a pigment has been, and, we fear, still is, much used in the colouring of wall-papers—in fact, Kay's orpiment is such a valuable pigment artistically, that the paper-stainers can hardly do without it, if purchasers will have æsthetic greens and yellows. And here, before proceeding any further with the manufacture of arsenic, the writer desires to place before the reader certain experiences of his own with regard to wall-papers coloured with orpiment. Some years ago he went to one of the most noted of firms for æsthetic papers wherewith to cover the walls of his house. A few years after, his children were afflicted with obstinate sores about the mouth, the wrists, and the ankles. The village doctor was called in, an old-fashioned practitioner, who gave doses and prescribed diet, with no good result. Then all at once it occurred to the writer to have the wall-papers analysed. They were found to be charged with arsenic; the gum fastening the colour to the paper had yielded, and the arsenical dust was flying about and lodging everywhere. The children were removed, and recovered. A month later the whole party was in Germany, and the writer called on a friend living in the town where he had taken up his quarters, and inquired how he and his family were. 'Oh! I am well enough; but my boys are suffering from some most intractable sores about their wrists and ankles.'

'Arsenic!' exclaimed the writer.

'But,' said his friend, 'my neighbour, General von B—, has his young people suffering in the same manner.'

'Exactly—arsenic.'

Now, in German towns there are public analysts who for a small charge—in this case a mark, one shilling—will analyse what are suspicious substances. The testing of the papers followed; and it proved that in the bedrooms of the English boys there were three coatings of wall-papers all laden with arsenic; and it was the same with those of the German General's family.

The question naturally arises: Is the manufacture of arsenic prejudicial to the health of the workers? To a certain extent it must be so; but it is not so to anything like the extent that might be supposed. The best means of resisting arsenic is by the use of soap and water. The workmen engaged in the manufacture have their mouths and noses muffled, to prevent their inhaling the dust. They wash and completely change their clothing on leaving work, and they enjoy complete freedom from zymotic diseases, as all germs are killed, either by the arsenic dust, or by the sulphurous acid given off by the manufacture. The time of greatest mischief is the summer, when the men perspire; then the arsenic adheres, and produces sores. Moreover, where there is a wound, if arsenic enters it, it will not heal till the bone has been reached. The best remedy for sores produced by arsenic is fuller's earth. The men believe that the arsenic produces shortness of breath and asthma; but this is really the result of their having to work all day with their noses and mouths covered by woollen mufflers.

Let us now look at the manufacture, and for that purpose we will take the Devon Great Consols Mine, where the largest amount of arsenic is made. This occupies a tongue of land about which the river Tamar forms a loop. It is completely barren on its top, all vegetation being killed by the fumes of sulphurous acid. The mine was worked for copper between 1844 and 1862 with wonderful results. The lode was thirty feet wide, and ran for a mile. After that, it gave out, and has been worked mainly for arsenic since 1874.

Arsenical mundic contains from twelve and a half to seventeen per cent. of arsenic, and from twenty-five to thirty per cent. of iron. It has a silvery lead look, with yellow stains in it where is copper. The first process consists in dividing the copper ore from the mundic. For this purpose all the rock brought up from the mine is broken into pieces of the size of a nut; then this, as well as the refuse, is 'jigged,' that is to say is subjected to shaking in sieves, which let the small particles fall through, and reserve only the nuggets. The small matter is not, however, wasted; it is subjected to washing in 'strips,' where the water deposits first the mundic, as heaviest, then the copper ore, and lastly the refuse. The refuse, however, is not dismissed till it has been again jigged and washed, so that every particle of copper and of mundic has been saved from it. What passes away is then mere earthy matter.

The lumps of broken stone cannot be separated thus easily by water; they have to be assorted by hand. For this purpose girls are employed, locally called 'bál maidens,' from the Cornish

word 'bál,' which signifies a mine. These girls, five in a row, recline on sloping shelves of board, with a table before them and a trough. On each side of the table are three wooden boxes. With a curved iron tool the girls rake the stones to them and sort them, according to colour. The yellow and 'peacock' copper is thrown into the trough under their noses. The mundic is tossed adroitly into the nearest box on right or left; the 'elvan,' or inferior, into the second; and the rubbish into the third.

Before the table flows a stream of water. The stones are brought in barrows from the jiggers, and are tipped into the water. Then a young man with a fork dips them out and throws them upon the table, and so continually supplies the bál maidens with material for selection. The boxes have to be examined by the overlooker, to make sure that the girls have not been careless and have thrown away good stuff. Then the copper ore is sent away to Wales to be smelted. As it requires four tons of coal to smelt one ton of ore, it is obviously advisable to convey the ore to the coal, and not bring the coal to the ore. The ore is worth about twenty-five shillings a ton.

The mundic is now taken to the furnaces, where it is first subjected to fires made of ordinary common coal. It passes along with the smoke into condensers. When condensed, it is gray, being mixed with smoke soot. In this condition it is called 'arsenic soot.' The condensation takes place on the floor and sides of the chimney, which is carried many hundred feet at an incline to a main shaft. From the condenser the arsenic is scraped out by the workmen closely muffled; then is again subjected to fire in calciners, the fire being of anthracite coal. Beside the ordinary furnaces, there are two sorts of calciners in use of a very original and interesting character. One of these is an enormous drum thirty feet long and three feet six inches in diameter, furnished with flanges internally. This drum or cylinder rotates at an incline. The arsenic soot is tipped into it at the top, and is turned over and over as the cylinder revolves, partly by its own weight, partly by the flanges. A fire is burning at one end of the drum, and the flame passes through it, consuming the arsenic as it falls, or is tossed athwart it. It is possible to look into the glowing interior as it rotates and watch the fiery heat scintillate with the arsenic that falls as a shower of stars. Another calciner consists of a horizontal rotary metal disc like a millstone, somewhat convex. The cap of this disc is stationary, and is armed with fangs that reach almost to the disc. The arsenic soot flows in through the centre of the cap, and is turned over, ploughed up by the fangs as the disc on which it rests revolves. A furnace on one side sends its fiery breath between the rotating nether disc and the coverer, and turns both to a glowing red, so that the arsenic is volatilised, and all the dross slides away to the lowest portion of the machine and discharges itself over the edge. The vapour is carried through the condensers, of which a mile in length exist. In the side of this gradually ascending brick chimney are openings closed with iron doors. These are ten feet apart. When the furnace is let out, the doors are opened, and the arsenic dust and crystals are raked and cut out.

The crystalline formation is from two to three inches thick on the sides, but two-thirds of the arsenic deposited is on the floor. It is now as white as paper. Some of the clusters of rhombohedral crystals are very beautiful. The arsenic has to be removed whilst warm to the mill to be ground; if left to get cold, the hardness of the crystals would cut the grinders to pieces. At the mill, the workmen are again closely muffled. They have to heave the arsenic turned out from barrows into the mill hopper. When reduced to powder in the mill, it is put into casks that contain from three hundredweight to three hundredweight twenty-five pounds, which are conveyed to the stores.

The vapour from the calciners, after passing through the condensers, traverses a sheet of falling water, which arrests a certain amount of the sulphur in the fumes. Owing to the noxious effect of sulphurous acid on vegetation, more than a certain amount of this acid is not allowed to be given off; it is therefore sought to arrest it on its way. The water as it flows away is milky, or rather like soap and water, from the sulphur it contains. The height of the shaft is one hundred and twenty-five feet.

In Styria and Carinthia, there is much arsenic-eating among the peasants; the women take it to give themselves a good complexion and to make their hair fine and glossy. The men take it because they believe that it gives them wind in climbing in the chase after chamois. There is nothing of this sort in Cornwall and Devon. In Styria and Carinthia it is known that an arsenic-eater can never be broken off the habit, and that, if arsenic be compulsorily kept from the eater, death rapidly ensues. It is believed in the Tamar—and this is perhaps true—that an arsenic-worker is fit for no other work. He must remain at this occupation. Health and breath fail him at other employments. Eventually, it may be that chronic arsenical poisoning ensues; but this may be staved off, if not wholly prevented, by scrupulous cleanliness, by care taken not only to wash in the 'changing-house,' but to bathe freely at home. As one of the foremen said to the writer of this article: 'Against arsenic the best antidote is soap taken externally.'

BY ACCIDENT.

CHAPTER II.

THE local Society of Ancient Chums met every Monday night in the bar parlour of the *Hop Pocket* inn, situated in the pleasant Kentish village of Bennington. It was a fraternity of old friends and acquaintances who assembled once a week for social enjoyment, conversation, discussion of the questions of the day, the consumption of tobacco and accompaniments. There was no subscription to the Society, but in its place there was an elaborate system of fines, so framed that the oldest and most practised member was pretty sure to be mulcted at least once during an evening, so that the community might fairly be styled self-supporting. The last Monday of each month was marked by the reception of guests, and was therefore of a more convivial and hilarious character than ordinary nights.

The Monday night following the events recorded in the last chapter was Grand Night, and despite the character of the weather—bitterly cold with a driving snow—there was a large muster of members and their friends; in fact, every chair in the room was occupied but the most prominent one—the President's. Eight o'clock struck, and at eight o'clock proceedings were ruled to commence.

'Martin don't often hev to pay for bein' late,' remarked Mr Wicks, a copper-nosed gentleman in the chandlery line. 'Wonder what's kep him?'

'He's in general off duty at half-past seven, ain't he?' said his neighbour, who had village tailor stamped all over him.

'Sure-ly, unless the weather's agin him,' said a large man in black with a white neckcloth—sexton, clerk, and beadle of Bennington. 'President pays double fine, don't he?'

'That's one to you, Mr Selah, for not bein' sure of the rules!' shouted out two or three voices, and Mr Selah plumped down his coin.

'I move that we give Mr Martin five minutes' grace,' said a grave gentleman, rising.

The motion was seconded and carried.

The five minutes had just expired, and the Society was on the point of proceeding to elect a temporary President in the place of the absent Martin, when the door opened, and in waddled a round little barrel of a man, with a ruddy, good-tempered face, who was attired in the uniform of signalman on the Great Southern Railway. He was greeted with a storm of ironical applause; but there was an unusual gravity about his demeanour which checked it.

'I'm quite ready to pay my fine, gentlemen,' he said as he took his seat in the Presidential chair; 'and I'm ter'ble sorry for havin' kep you all waitin', 'specially as it's Grand Night; but when you've heard what I've got to tell, you won't blame me.—Now, give your orders, gentlemen, and let's to business.'

Orders went flying about the room, so that the landlord and his two wenches had as much as they could do to attend to them. When comparative quiet was restored, old Martin said: 'P'raps you won't think it much that I have to tell, but it's a bit cur'ous, and as part of my fine is to sing a song or make a speech, you'll please take it for what it's worth.'

'Hear, hear!' resounded through the room.

'My box,' said the old man, 'is, as you all know, at the level crossin' at Causey End, and my last dooty afore bein' relieved is to signal the down mail at seven-twenty-five. At seven-thirty I'm relieved. Well, at seven-fifteen I got the signal that she'd passed through Brickenden Junction. At seven-twenty I heard her whistle. At seven-twenty-three I saw her head lamps comin' up at quarter speed, 'cos I hadn't got the all-clear signal from Marsh House, which didn't surprise me, as they've been doin' up the embankment there. So the mail came slowly past, so slow that I could see as how there was very few people in the coaches, which, as it's gettin' on towards Christmas-time, ain't surprisin'.—Now comes the strange part. The mail pulled up, and out o' the winder of a first-class coach not half-a-dozen yards from me a gentleman was leanin': his arms a hangin' down outside, and his head pushed forward, like, for all the world, as if he

was very ill. For what I could see, his compartment hadn't nobody else in it.

'I sings out to him: "Are you ill, sir? Shall I wire to the next station, or call the guard?" But he didn't make no answer; leas'taways, I didn't hear none, as the wind was howlin' fit to kill any noise under a engine whistle. In another minute I should ha' been up on the footboard alongside him; but the all-clear signal came from Marsh House, and I had to 'tend to it. Howsomedever, as the guard's van passed by I sung out that there was a gent took ill in a fust-class compartment; but I don't know if Sam Hall heerd it. Then the mail went on, and I prepared to clear out.'

The general opinion, expressed in every variety of interjectional phrase, was that it was very strange, and Martin was asked what he thought of it.

'Well,' he replied, 'if you ask me my candid opinion, I give it for what it is wuth. You see, it was the Injian mail. Well, says you, what difference does that make? A great deal, says I. I've been on the Great Southern now a matter o' forty years, and my experience is that as a rule the Injian mail is the liveliest train that goes out o' Lunnon—much more livelier 'n excursions and them like.—How's that? says you. Because, says I, gents goin' to Injia for the Lord knows how long, perhaps never to come back no more, goes off as happy as they can. Their pals gives 'em big dinners, and there's drinks at the terminus afore startin', and all that; and I can tell you I've seen high-jinks sometimes in the coaches when the train's slowed down as it did to-night. So, my opinion is that this gent was—well, he was ill. You can't eat your cake and have it, as the sayin' is; and he'd eaten his cake, and he'd taken somethink along with it, and the 'eat of the coach and one thing and another was too much for him. That's my notion.—But that wasn't what made me late.

'The mail went on. I set my distant to danger: Jim Boston come in to relieve me, and I went off. Now, as you all know, except the gents as is strangers, my road home lies along the side of the line for a matter o' half a mile; then I strikes the turnpike and leaves it. Well, it was blowin' and snowin' half an hour ago as it don't often blow and snow in these parts, and although I'd got my lantern, it was jest as much as I could do to see my way along the path by the line. At anyrate it was so precious dark that I couldn't see a big chap a settin' on the slope of the embankment a yard ahead of me, and well nigh tumbles over him. I pulls up sharp. He was a settin' and groanin' and makin' use of words, gents, which would cost him a fine a minute in this 'ere select company. So I turns my light on him, and gives him a "What cheer, mate?"

'He started, and stops his prayers. "What cheer?" says he. "Precious poor cheer this journey. I've lost my way to Brickenden Junction, and thought I'd try a cut along the line, when these blooming tallygraph wires trips me up, and I've gone and sprained my ankle."

"Just as well, mate," says I, "that you tumbled where you did. A foot t'other way would have got you across the down metals." Then I helps him up; but he were so precious lame that I as

good as carried him to the turnpike; and if he weighed a hounce, he weighed thirteen stone, and I ain't as young as I were.

'As luck would heve it, the mail-cart was waitin' at the level crossin'; so I gets him into it. He gives me a shillin', as I thinks, and says good-night, and off he goes; and off I goes home. When my missis see me, she give a reglar shout, and says, says she: "Why, Bob, whereever heve you been? You're all blood." Sure enough, I was—coat, cuffs, and collar. Rum start, thinks I, for a chap with a sprained ankle to bleed. I reckon he'd hurt hisself more than he thought. Then I looks at the coin he gave me, and it warn't a shillin' at all, but a bit o' brass of the same size, with "Royal Arcadia Music Hall—Free Pass Check—not transferable," wrote on it.—And that's what made me late, gentlemen.—Here's to you all!'

This speech of Bob Martin's gave rise to a lively discussion, which lasted a good half-hour. At the expiration of that time the President arose, knocked on the table, and was suggesting that some gentleman should oblige the company with a song, when the landlord rushed into the room with great news on his face. 'Night-mail wrecked near Singleby,' he gasped. 'Thirty or forty killed, and hundreds wounded!'

Half the assembly sprang to their feet. Pipes were taken from lips, glasses remained suspended in mid-air, and a chorus of 'How do you know?' 'When?' and other questions of the kind, arose.

'Messenger just come in from Brickenden. All the doctors and carts in the country are being called for,' replied the breathless landlord.

'Well, it never rains but it pours,' said old Martin; 'and thank the Lord this ain't happened in my section.'

It is needless to say that the assembly of Ancient Chums was at once broken up, and that the majority of those who had met together for an evening of enjoyment at once hastened away to the scene of the catastrophe.

Dick Marsden still clung to one link which bound him to his old pleasant, happy life as an unfettered bachelor, in spite of the low estate to which he had fallen: this was his membership of a quiet little social club composed chiefly of old public-school men, where moderation in expense was the rule, and the outlay of more famous and pretentious institutions over magnificent architecture, grand rooms, liveries, and brilliant illumination, was devoted to the more immediately personal comforts of the members. When very sick at heart and down in his luck, Dick would walk over to the Snuggery, as it was called, and there, in the chat and mirth of old friends and men of his own station, forget for a while his domestic misery. After he had seen his uncle comfortably settled in a compartment of the mail-train, Dick walked over to the house in Portland Place to give a few final instructions to the caretaker, and to make a general survey of locks and bolts; and then, discovering that he had a piece of gold in his pocket, resolved for once to be selfish and to dine at the Snuggery.

He dined, and after dinner played a couple of games of billiards. Then, it now being nearly nine o'clock, he prepared to go home. As he passed through the hall the porter was putting

a Central News telegram on the frame. Curiosity prompted him to read it; it was as follows: 'Terrible Accident to the Mail on the Great Southern. Reported loss of twelve lives.—Later —The Indian mail-train ran off the line at a point near Singleby where the embankment has lately been repaired. The loss of life has been exaggerated. Nine bodies are lying at the Singleby Station; over twenty persons were injured.'

'Good God!' exclaimed the young man, as he burst out of the building, and calling a hansom, bade the man drive to the Institution where Marian Akhurst lodged. Luckily, she was in. In a few words, Dick told her the news, and asked her if she could come with him at once to Singleby.

'Of course there is a chance that the dear old fellow may have escaped,' he said. 'But as there was no telegram for me at the club, I fear'—

'Perhaps not the worst,' said the girl.

'There were so few passengers by the train,' said Dick, 'that the large proportion of casualties makes the chance of uncle's escaping a small one: unless more people got in at the other terminus, which, as it was the Indian mail, is likely. However, if you can come, Marian, it will be such a comfort to me.'

They were just in time to catch the last train to Singleby. It pulled up half a mile from the scene of the accident: Marian and Dick alighted in the midst of the blinding storm, and, guided by the flare of many bonfires, proceeded, in the company of scores of people bound upon the same errand as themselves, to where gangs of men were already working hard to clear the line. A line of police barred their way; but upon stating their business, they were allowed to pass; and with what trepidation they approached the little station where the bodies of the killed lay awaiting identification may be imagined. Once within the door, all doubts were set at rest, for the first body they saw was that of poor old Christopher Marsden.

'Strange thing about that gentleman, sir,' said an official who witnessed Dick's recognition of his uncle's body. 'The coach he was in didn't leave the line, and he was the only party in it who was killed. He was found leaning out of window; and as he was evidently killed by a blow in the back of the head, it's supposed he was looking out of window when the front part of the train left the metals, and must have been struck by a bolt or a timber or something from the next coach which went over the bank.'

Marian knelt down by the body, and with professional deftness examined a terrible wound at the base of the poor old gentleman's skull. 'Yes; this was what killed him,' she said. 'Yet he must have been looking in the opposite direction to that in which the train was going.'

'Possibly to call the guard,' said Dick. 'At anyrate, there he lies; and I have lost my best and, I was going to say, my only friend in the world. Poor old Uncle Christopher!' He looked at Marian. There were tears in her eyes, and in the face of this common sorrow their hands met with gentle pressure.

'The body, I suppose, must not be removed?' said Dick.

'No, sir; not till after the inquest,' replied the official.

Then they quitted the terrible scene, and were lucky enough to secure the last two beds at the small inn adjoining the station; for there was no train back to London, and there had been a great demand for accommodation on behalf of the many people who had come down in quest of relations and friends.

ELF-BOLTS.

THERE is something very fascinating in the legends of dwarfs and elves. For the most part we have to look in the pages of Grimm or Hans Christian Andersen when we want to peep into the fairy world; but every now and then, in out-of-the-way places, we may find ourselves in curious proximity to those mysterious times. For instance, the writer remembers, some fifteen years ago, when living on the Yorkshire moors, overhearing a dispute which was taking place in a public-house between two old men, one of whom was the parish sexton. While digging a grave, the sexton had turned out what he called a fairy pipe. This well-known form of pipe, which is found dispersed all over the country, is so small that you cannot pass the tip of the little finger into the bowl. No doubt it was used when tobacco was scarce and expensive, and its diminutive size has caused it to be attributed to the elves and fairies who alone could make use of it. The dispute, however, was not about the pipe. Both the old men agreed as to whom the pipe had belonged to; but they were endeavouring to settle what kind of 'bacca' the fairies smoked. Various suggestions were made, and different herbs named, when I joined in the conversation, and turned it from pipes to elf-bolts or elf-shot, some of which I produced from my pocket; and from these old inhabitants I gathered that the flint arrow-heads or elf-shot were used by these same elfin folk who owned the tobacco pipes. The district where I lived was rich in these prehistoric articles, and they were picked up in quantities in the fields round about.

It is hardly surprising that the natives should regard these queer-looking arrow-heads as belonging to the fairy folk, when for hundreds of years their direct ancestors had inhabited that part of Yorkshire, into which education had made but little progress. A place close by was called Dwarriden, which was remarkable for echoes; and when I submitted the name to the best authority on place-names, I was told that it meant 'the abode of the dwarfs,' as, in Scandinavian mythology, wherever you found an echo it was the voice of a dwarf answering you in reply.

Another curious survival in the same parish was this old tradition: Mothers used to threaten their children with a certain black raven, who would come if they were naughty and carry them off, just as once upon a time he had done, when

he ravaged the country and destroyed everything. The only interpretation of this awful threat I gathered from an old woman, who told me that in her young days it was firmly believed that some great calamity had once befallen the district. As the black raven was the Danish emblem, it is quite possible an incursion from that people gave rise to this story, which had survived all those long years.

Few people know what an amusing and instructive pursuit the search after flint weapons is. To begin with, it takes you out of the house for a walk very often when you would have stayed in. Spring and autumn are the best times for searching, and a ploughed field should be chosen that has been well rained upon, so that the flints are washed clear and can be easily detected. I am speaking only of a country in which the natural stone is not flint. Where natural flints abound, you can only judge of the genuineness of the implement by the workings of the tool, which are always to be seen. In the ordinary districts away from the chalk, each surface flint will prove either a real implement or a flake struck off in its manufacture. These remarks may be said to apply to those lucky spots where flints are found, and the idea may be that there are not many such about. I differ from this idea. So far as my own experience goes, I have found these elf-bolts wherever I have been; and if there is one bit of fairy romance left connected with them, it is in their being so universal that it gives the notion of some spirit-work in their distribution.

Any one who follows the plan I suggest of going out into the ploughed fields and searching for flints, will come across many curious implements. Among them none is so peculiar as the scraper. This varies a good deal in form, but the common type is a sort of half oyster-shell, supposing this to be solid where the fish is, and cut off square where the point of the shell comes, so that one side presents a flattened face, and the other a sloped well-worked back, ending in a sharpened cutting edge. I found scores of these before I knew what they were; and I must own I was astonished to find that the Eskimos of the present day adopt still this same form of flint scraper. It is difficult to reconcile the ancient flint man of the Yorkshire moors with the Greenlanders in his curious snow-hut, living on the spoils of the chase and scraping the skins of his animals with the same sort of weapon.

Another analogous instance of identity of flint form was the following. I took up to the British Museum a quantity of flints and elf-shot for examination. One was selected no bigger than my little finger-nail, and I was told this was an Egyptian arrow-head. But how came an Egyptian arrow-head on our English moors? There is this remarkable distinction about these Egyptian types of arrow-heads—they are not pointed. Supposing a triangle of flint, it was their custom to put the point into the shaft, and to use the broad base as a point to face the enemy, exactly reversing what I may call the British custom. Yet here on the moors I find not one, but several, undoubtedly proving that the men who used these flints were cognisant of both shapes of elf-shot. The small size of the Egyptian type is very peculiar, as it is utterly

different from the arrow-head commonly found not only in Britain but all over the world. I have elf-shot from Italy, Greece, North America, South America, and other lands, but none like the Egyptian arrow-point.

It may be said that human beings all develop similar characteristics, and it is quite reasonable to suppose the Egyptian and the British flint man would originate similar ideas. This may be possible; but I hardly think it accounts for the identity of flint forms. This is the most striking feature when a collection of British flints is put beside one gathered from all countries. There is little difference, again, in a very interesting class of implement, the saw, between the British flint saw and the Egyptian. I found on the moors some very delicate flint saws, and recently I have obtained from Egypt flint saws wonderfully similar in form. Perhaps with these saws was performed that difficult operation of trepanning, which was known in primitive times, and practised. Skulls are found in British interments which have been trepanned, only no metal plate was used, but a piece of another skull was let in in place of it. The agony of such an operation may be imagined; and with some thousands of collected flints before me, I could not select one I could deem fit to use for such a purpose.

The delicacy of workmanship of many elf-bolts is remarkable. I have some on which thousands of blows with some implement must have been delivered before the sharp point and barbed wings were formed. When it is remembered that any blow might snap the brittle flint, it must have needed a master's hand to bring such elf-shot to perfection. When H.M.S. *Challenger* was on her cruise, and arrived at Tierra del Fuego, the natives there, who are still in a Stone Age condition, were found to have utilised a broken soda-water bottle, from the fragments of which they made arrow-heads. I have one of these arrows, with its glass tip exquisitely made in the same pattern as those I found on the moors. There are undoubtedly numbers of what I may call worked flints to be picked up in the fields, showing upon their face the marks of the tool, and yet it is impossible to assign them any definite name. The fact is we know very little about the various uses to which flint was put. In many parts it must have been scarce. It is quite one hundred and more miles from the moors where I made a large collection to the nearest chalk district, and every atom of flint now found must have been carried there by hand.

The true elf-bolt, in all its well-formed beauty, is not so commonly picked up as the core or matrix from which the implement has been struck, or the flint fragment chipped off in its formation. Still, it is advisable to collect all bits, no matter whether they seem valuable or not, as a second examination often proves them to have been in use. Small pointed flints are found such as could be utilised for boring purposes, and very often a rounded flint proves after washing to have marks of blows on it, showing it to have been a hammer-stone, perhaps for making implements.

Though in the case of flint deposits in Britain it may not be possible to point to this or

that spot, and say, here such and such a battle was fought, and here are the remains of the weapons used on that occasion, still history may perhaps be brought to bear in other places. I have several very fine arrow-heads found at Lake Trasimene, in Italy, where, it will be remembered, Hannibal encountered the Romans and defeated them with enormous slaughter. I can see no reason why these arrow-heads should not be the weapons used by the warlike tribes who crossed the Alps with Hannibal, and in this particular battle fell in very large numbers. The iron weapons of the Romans have no doubt long since perished and rusted away, but the flints endure. We may know very little about the prehistoric times and the fierce battles waged by the wild tribes of those days, but their remains are around and about us. Time does not affect the flints. They show no sign of age, excepting a kind of dullness, and smoothness to touch, which newly-broken flint never has.

As a rule, few people care about collecting such things or thinking about them. It is a tedious amusement to walk up and down a ploughed field with a bent back, but it is by no means unhealthy. The soil smells with delicious fragrance, and you have the lark soaring above your head with his musical notes. A fairy pipe or two is often added to your 'bag,' and though some days may be blank, every now and again you have lucky finds that well reward you.

In advocating the search after flints I do so because I believe there is much yet to be found and learned about them. I have avoided quoting from scientific works, or trying to raise this paper above the level of a chat about elf-shot. Besides the fact that from the earliest times these flint weapons have been regarded in many places with something like superstition, they are, from the point of antiquity alone, well worth collecting. Year after year they are ploughed over and turned up, and they only want a quick eye to detect them. Some soils are naturally better than others, especially such as more readily yield to the influence of rain.

If I refer once more to the identity of flint-forms, it is because of late my collection has been much increased by flints from other parts of the world, and I am amazed at the resemblance in them to what I have found in England. The invention and use of flint implements seems to have been universal. Hence, the subject is well worth pursuing, and is one which the amateur can take up with pleasure. It is not confined to one particular place; wherever you go, you may pursue it. I have a friend at this moment on the Nile who gets the Arab boys to search for flints; and he writes to me about the wonderful knives, saws, and sickles he is collecting. Another friend lately sent me some flints which he found when walking on the battlefield of Marathon. It is well known that some of the wild tribes on the side of the Persian monarch tipped their arrows with stone. There is no place, and I was going to add no time, where and when flint-hunting cannot be pursued; but I draw the line at shooting. I once got into great disgrace by holding my head down when after partridges. Birds kept rising in front of me and getting off untouched. The fact was I was crossing fields rich with flints. The keeper

afterwards went to my host and complained. 'I can't make that gentleman out,' he said; 'he keeps his eyes down on the ground, and never looks at his birds. I fancy he must have something wrong in his 'ead.'

SOME EARLY STEAMSHIPS.

It is a matter of considerable surprise to most people, on taking a retrospective survey of the growth of the steam-navigation of this country, to discover how very remotely into the present century such a view carries them. The Steamship, somehow, seems to appeal to the understanding of the younger generation as one of the most modern among latter-day creations. It is difficult to associate her existence with the period of the Crimean War, and it seems wholly incongruous to talk of her as pre-Victorian. This, undoubtedly, is owing to the wonderful and rapid revolution wrought by the marine engine in the conditions of the sea-life. But though, indeed, the steam-vessel cannot afford to 'smile at the claims of long descent,' she was a very tangible realisation when the locomotive was still in embryo, and the electric telegraph a factor of the future which yet remained to be dreamt of.

The earliest steamers the world ever saw, not reckoning the experimental craft constructed by such men as Fulton, Bell, Symington, and Watt, were those employed in the transatlantic trade. As far back as the year 1819, the Yankee paddle-steamer 'Savannah,' of three hundred tons burden, crossed from the port of that name, in Georgia, to Liverpool. She occupied twenty-five days upon the passage; but, as she was fully rigged, and under all sail during at least two-thirds of the voyage, the merit of her performance, as an illustration of the superiority of the engine over canvas, is somewhat doubtful. Yet she was beyond dispute the first steamer to accomplish a long sea-voyage, and to the Americans belongs the credit of her exploit. Indeed, from the time of their last war with us, down to within a quarter of a century ago, our Yankee neighbours generally seemed to be a little ahead of this country in maritime matters. They taught us a lesson in shipbuilding by their famous Baltimore clippers, and they were the first to demonstrate in a practical manner, and to the complete capsizing of the learned Dr Lardner's theories, the possibility of employing steam for the purposes of ocean navigation. It was not, however, until a couple of decades later than the voyage of the 'Savannah' that the successful passages of two memorable vessels from England to America fairly established the era of what has been called the Atlantic steam ferry. These ships were respectively the 'Sirius' and the 'Great Western.' The former was a craft of about seven hundred tons burden, with engines of three hundred and twenty horse-power: she sailed from Cork on the 4th of April 1838, under the command of Lieutenant Roberts, R.N., bound for New York. The latter vessel was a steamer of 1340 tons, builders' measurement, with engines of four hundred and forty horse-power: she was commanded by Captain Hoskins, R.N., and sailed from Bristol on the 8th of April in the same year, bound likewise for New York. The 'Sirius,' it was calculated,

had a start of her competitor by about seven hundred nautical miles; but it was known that her utmost capabilities of speed scarcely exceeded eight knots an hour; whilst the 'Great Western,' on her trial trip from Blackwall to Gravesend, ran eleven knots an hour without difficulty.

The issue of the race was therefore awaited with the utmost curiosity on both sides of the Atlantic. Contemporary records usually afford good evidence of the significance of past events, and the interest in this novel ocean match was prodigious, to judge from the accounts with which the Liverpool and New York papers of the day teemed. The following is in brief the narrative of the voyage of these two famous ships across the Western Ocean. The 'Sirius,' after leaving Cork on the 4th of April, encountered very heavy weather, which greatly retarded her progress. She arrived, however, off Sandy Hook on the evening of Sunday, the 22d of April; but going aground, she did not get into the North River until the following morning. When it was known that she had arrived, New York grew instantly agitated with excitement. 'The news,' ran the account published by the *Journal of Commerce* in the United States, 'spread like wild-fire through the city, and the river became literally dotted all over with boats conveying the curious to and from the stranger. There seemed to be a universal voice in congratulation, and every visage was illuminated with delight. A tacit conviction seemed to pervade every bosom that a most doubtful problem had been satisfactorily solved; visions of future advantage to science, to commerce, to moral philosophy, began to float before the "mind's eye;" curiosity to travel through the old country, and to inspect ancient institutions, began to stimulate the inquiring.

'Whilst all this was going on, suddenly there was seen over Governor's Island a dense black cloud of smoke spreading itself upward, and betokening another arrival. On it came with great rapidity, and about three o'clock in the afternoon its cause was made fully manifest to the accumulated multitudes at the Battery. It was the steamship "Great Western," of about 1600 tons burden (*sic*), [The difference probably lies between the net and the gross tonnage], under the command of Lieutenant Hoskins, R.N. She had left Bristol on the 8th inst., and on the 23d was making her triumphant entry into the port of New York. This immense moving mass was propelled at a rapid rate through the waters of the Bay; she passed swiftly and gracefully round the "Sirius," exchanging salutes with her, and then proceeded to her destined anchorage in the East River. If the public mind was stimulated by the arrival of the "Sirius" it became almost intoxicated with delight upon view of the superb "Great Western." The latter vessel was only fourteen clear days out; and neither vessel had sustained a damage worth mentioning, notwithstanding that both had to encounter very heavy weather. The "Sirius" was spoken with on the 14th of April in latitude 45° north, longitude 37° west. The "Great Western" was spoken on the 15th of April in latitude 46° 26' north, longitude 37° west. At these respective dates the "Great Western" had run 1305 miles in seven days from King Road; and the "Sirius" 1305

miles in ten days from Cork. The "Great Western" averaged 186½ miles per day, and the "Sirius" 130½ miles: "Great Western" gained on the "Sirius" fifty-six miles per day. The "Great Western" averaged seven and three-quarter miles per hour; the "Sirius" barely averaged five and a half miles per hour.'

Such was the first voyage made across the Atlantic by these two early steamships, and there is something of the true philosophy of history to be found in the interest which their advent created. It is worthy of passing note to learn what ultimately became of these celebrated vessels. The 'Sirius,' not proving staunch enough for the Atlantic surges, was sent to open steam-communication between London and St Petersburg, in which trade she was for several years successfully employed. The 'Great Western' plied regularly from Bristol to New York until the year 1847, when she was sold to the Royal Mail Company, and ran as one of their crack ships until 1857, in which year she was broken up at Vauxhall as being obsolete, and unable profitably to compete with the new class of steamers being built.

The success of these two vessels may be said to have completely established steam as a condition of the transatlantic navigation of the future. 'In October 1838,' says Lindsay, in his *History of Merchant Shipping*, 'Sir John Tobin, a well-known merchant of Liverpool, seeing the importance of the intercourse now rapidly increasing between the Old and New worlds, despatched on his own account a steamer to New York. She was built at Liverpool, after which place she was named, and made the passage outwards in sixteen and a half days. It was now clearly proved that the service could be performed, not merely with profit to those who engaged it, but with a regularity and speed which the finest description of sailing-vessels could not be expected to accomplish. If any doubts still existed on these important points, the second voyage of the "Great Western" set them at rest, she having on this occasion accomplished the outward passage in fourteen days sixteen hours, bringing with her the advices of the fastest American sailing-ships which had sailed from New York long before her, and thus proving the necessity of having the mails in future conveyed by steamers.'

In fact, as early as October 1838, the British Government, being satisfied of the superiority of steam-packets over sailing-ships, issued advertisements inviting tenders for the conveyance of the American mails by the former class of vessels. The owners of the 'Great Western,' big with confidence in the reputation of that ship, applied for the contract; but, not a little to their chagrin, it was awarded to Mr (afterwards Sir Samuel) Cunard, who as far back as 1830 had proposed the establishment of a steam-mail service across the Atlantic. The terms of the original contract were, that for the sum of fifty-five thousand pounds per annum, Messrs Cunard, Burns, and MacIver should supply three ships suitable for the purpose, and accomplish two voyages each month between Liverpool and the United States, leaving England at certain periods; but shortly afterwards, it was deemed more expedient to name fixed dates of departure on both sides of the Western Ocean. Subsequently, another ship

was required to be added to the service, and the amount of the subsidy was raised to eighty-one thousand pounds a year. The steam mail service between Liverpool, Halifax, and Boston was regularly established in 1840, the first vessel engaged in it being the 'Britannia,' the pioneer ship of the present Cunard line.

We get an admirable idea of what these early steamships were from Dickens's account of this same 'Britannia,' which was the vessel he crossed to America in on his first visit to that country in 1842. In one of his letters to John Forster, describing a storm they were overtaken by, he unconsciously reflects the wondering regard with which the world still viewed the triumphant achievements of the marine engine. 'For two or three hours,' he writes, 'we gave it up as a lost thing. This was not the exaggerated apprehension of a landsman merely. The head-engineer, who had been in one or the other of the Cunard vessels since they began running, had never seen such stress of weather; and I afterwards heard Captain Hewitt say that nothing but a steamer, and one of that strength, could have kept her course and stood it out. A sailing-vessel must have beaten off and driven where she would; while through all the fury of that gale they actually made fifty-four miles headlong through the tempest, straight on end, not varying their track in the least.' What would the skipper of one of the modern 'Atlantic greyhounds' think of such a feat? And, more interesting speculation still, what must Dickens himself have thought of the performances he lived to witness as against this astonishing accomplishment on the part of the old 'Britannia'?

There exists a tendency to ridicule the early steamers as they appear in portraits, with their huge paddle-boxes; tall, thin, dog-eared funnels; and heavily-rigged masts, as though their engines were regarded as quite auxiliary to their sail-power, and by no means to be relied upon. Contrasted with some of the leviathans of the present day, the steamers of half a century ago are no longer calculated to strike an awe into the beholder; but, in truth, some very fine vessels were built whilst the marine engine was still quite in its infancy. In a volume of the *Railway Magazine* for 1839 is an account of what are termed colossal steamers. 'An immense steamer,' runs the description, 'upwards of two hundred feet long, was lately launched at Bristol, for plying between England and America; but the one now building at Carling & Co.'s, Limehouse, for the American Steam Navigation Company, surpasses anything of the kind hitherto made. She is to be named after our Queen, the "Victoria;" will cost from eighty to one hundred thousand pounds, has about one hundred and fifty men now employed daily upon her, and is expected to be finished in November next. The extreme length is about 253 feet; but she is 237 feet between the perpendiculars, 40½ feet beam between the paddle-boxes, and twenty-seven feet one inch deep from the floor to the inner side of the spar-deck. The engines are two, of 250 horse-power each, with six feet four inch cylinders, and seven feet stroke. They are to be fitted with Hall's patent condensers, in addition to the common ones. She displaces at sixteen feet 2740 tons of water; her computed tonnage is 1800 tons. At

the water-line every additional inch displaces eighteen and a half tons. The average speed is expected to be about two hundred nautical miles a day, and consumption of coal about thirty tons. The best Welsh coal is to be used. It is calculated she will make the outward passage to New York in eighteen days, and the homeward in twelve, consuming 540 tons of coal out, and 360 home. Expectation is on tiptoe for the first voyage of this gigantic steamer, alongside of which other steamers look like little fishing-boats.'

The next route on which steam-navigation was opened, following upon that of the North Atlantic passage, was between Great Britain and India. The steamers of the Honourable Company had indeed doubled the Cape nearly two years before the 'Sirius' and 'Great Western' sailed upon their first trip. The *Nautical Magazine* for 1836 contains the original prospectus issued by a syndicate of London merchants upon the subject of steam-communication with the East Indies. As an illustration of the almost incredible strides that have been made in ocean-travelling since that period, this piece of literature is most instructive. The circular opens by announcing that it is proposed to establish steam-traffic with India, extending, perhaps, even to Australia! It points out in sanguine terms how those distant parts of the earth, by the contemplated arrangement, 'will be reached at the outset in the short period of seventy-three days; and, when experience is obtained, this time will in all probability be reduced by one-third; shortening the distance by the route in question, from England to Australia, in forty days' steaming, at ten miles an hour. If two days be allowed for stoppages at stations, not averaging more than a thousand miles apart throughout the line, the whole time for passing between the extreme points would only be sixty days; but a relay of vessels will follow, if the undertaking be matured, in which case twenty-four hours will be ample time at the depôts, and a communication may be expected to be established, and kept up throughout the year, between England and Australia, in fifty days. It is reasonably expected that Bombay will be reached in forty-eight days, Madras in fifty-five, Calcutta in fifty-nine, Penang in fifty-seven, Singapore in sixty, Batavia in sixty-two, Canton in sixty-eight, and Mauritius in fifty-four days.'

The *Nautical Magazine* writer gravely comments upon this scheme as quite plausible. He is indeed inclined to be anticipatory. Instead of seventy-three days to Australia, he is of opinion that the voyage may ultimately be accomplished in fifty, and that the table of time generally may be reduced by about one-third throughout; although, to qualify his somewhat daring speculations, he admits that it is well to base the calculations on the safe side. But the Honourable East India Company asserted their prerogatives, and put a stop to the scheme of the New Bengal Steam Company, as the undertaking was to have been called. This raised a strong feeling of dissatisfaction, and the Court of Directors was obliged to provide a substitute in lieu of the new line they had refused to sanction. Their own homely, lubberly craft were quite unequal to the requirements of 'prompt despatch' which even then was beginning to agitate the public mind.

The possibility of establishing steam-communication between England and India had been clearly demonstrated as early as the year 1825, when the 'Enterprise,' of 480 tons and 120 horse-power, sailed from London on the 16th of August, and arrived in Calcutta on the 7th of December. She was the first steamer to make the passage from this country to our great Eastern Empire; the first, indeed, ever to double the stormy headland of the Cape.

But it was not until the people of India began to petition and the merchants of London to clamour for the adoption of steam-power in the Indian navigation that the conservative old magnates of John Company were stimulated into action. Mr Waghorn's Overland Route had almost entirely superseded the sea-voyage by way of the Cape; but the want of an efficient packet service between London and Alexandria, and Suez and Bombay, was greatly felt. Accordingly, in December 1836, the steamship 'Atalanta' was despatched from Falmouth to ply on the Indian side of the route. She was a vessel of 630 tons burden, with engines of 210 horse-power, and was built at Blackwall by the once famous firm of Wigram and Green. The orders of Captain Campbell, who commanded her, were that he was to steam the whole distance, only resorting to sail-power in case of a failure of machinery, in order fully to test the superiority of the marine engine over canvas. She sustained an average speed of about eight knots an hour during the entire passage, and but for her repeated stoppages would undoubtedly have accomplished the quickest voyage yet made to India. She was followed, in March 1837, by the 'Bernice,' of 680 tons and 230 horse-power. This vessel, which likewise made the run without the assistance of her sails, left Falmouth on March 17th, and arrived at Bombay on the 13th of June. As the race between the 'Sirius' and the 'Great Western' may be said to have inaugurated the steam-navigation of the Atlantic, so did the voyages of the 'Atalanta' and 'Bernice' first establish regular communication by steamers between Great Britain and India. True, there had been desultory efforts of enterprise prior to this time, and the pioneer of the Peninsular and Oriental steamers, the 'Royal Tar,' had sailed some three years before; but there was no continual service. The London *Times* of November 11, 1838, pointed out the approaching change. 'Scarcely,' it says, 'has the wonder created in the world by the appearance of the "Great Western" and "British Queen" begun to subside, when we are again called upon to admire the rapid strides of enterprise by the notice of an iron steamship, the first of a line of steamers to ply between England and Calcutta, to be called the "Queen of the East," 2618 tons, and 600 horse-power. This magnificent vessel is designed by Mr W. D. Holmes, engineer to the Bengal Steam Committee, for a communication between England and India. Great praise is due to Captain Barber, late of the Honourable East India Company's service, the agent in London for the Steam Committee in Bengal, who has given every encouragement to Mr Holmes in carrying forward his splendid undertaking. When these vessels are ready, we understand the voyage between Falmouth and Calcutta will be made in thirty days.'

From this time ocean steamers multiplied rapidly. One after another of the now famous shipping firms sprang up, beginning with the Cunard, and Peninsular and Oriental lines. The first British steamship was registered at London in the year 1814: in 1842 there were 940 steamers registered; and already was the decay of the sailing-ship so largely anticipated, that Mr Sydney Herbert, in a Committee of the House of Commons, had this same year pointed out 'that the introduction of steamers, and the consequent displacement of the Leith smacks, Margate hoys, &c., would diminish the nursery for seamen by lessening the number of sailing-vessels.'

STARVED!

A REMINISCENCE OF AN ENGLISH SPRING.

'May 12, 1886, STARVED!'—Why starved? What is the meaning of this? A friend is examining a series of skins of the Swallow family, which I have just laid out for his inspection, and such is the question he puts, on reading the labels attached to them.

Don't you remember?—But no; you were in the 'south' at the time, and of course saw little or nothing of that terrible snow-storm which we, living on the English Borders, had in the middle of May. The effects will not be forgotten for a long time here. The skins of swallow, house-martin, and sand-martin, which are now lying before me, with the strange remark on the label, have a story to tell, which is, I think, worth recording. The extraordinary and variable winter of 1885-86 was followed by a spring quite as mutable, finishing with a storm in May, which in the wilder and more mountainous districts of the north of England will be referred to for many a year to come. Ere this, and despite all our climatic changes, our 'summer visitants' among the birds, true to that something which, for want of a better word, we call instinct, had arrived in their usual numbers; and the majority of them had already settled down in their nesting quarters, and begun those labours of perpetuating their species which they had travelled so many hundreds of miles to perform, when winter once more returned, taking full possession of the 'lap of May;' and, though its reign was short, yet it was quite long enough to cause such a fatality among the swallows as has never before been chronicled.

May was ushered in with a week of warm, balmy, and genial weather, the prevailing winds being from south and west, finishing on the 7th with a particularly fine hot day. The yet delicate and lacelike greenery which was decorating the trees and shrubs of our woods and copses, and is seen to the greatest advantage in spring, formed an enamelled bower for those migrant warblers to revel in, and their joyous, sweet songs rang through the woodland glades, as if in thankfulness for the safe accomplishment of their long and arduous journey. Above, the air was alive with the wheeling and twittering swallows and martins, revelling in the plenitude of their insect food. The next sunrise, however, changed all this, and the birds awoke to find the balmy south-breeze gone, and its place filled by

a cold east wind, accompanied with chill showers. This weather lasted for four days, each day getting colder and more bitter. No insects were to be seen during the prevalence of these cold winds; and on the 10th and 11th the swallows were first observed to be feeling the effects of cold and scarcity of subsistence. The birds had so overcome their natural timidity as to persistently seek the shelter—wherever they had the chance—of cottages, farmhouses, smithies, and other buildings; while the fishermen's huts were literally besieged by them; they would not be kept out, in their search for warmth.

Much sympathy was expressed for the poor birds, and every care was bestowed on them; but the heat merely to be found in houses was but a poor substitute for the want of food; and I am afraid the relief was in most cases but temporary. One which entered a cottage in an exhausted condition was carefully tended, and placed where it could receive the benefit of the warm hearth. After a short time it recovered, and took wing again, but only to make a couple of feeble turns round the humble dwelling, when it once more sought the friendly shelter, but this time only to die. Hardly had the last breath left the little body, and the film of death passed over its dark soft eyes, when something like a gray cloud seemed to spread outwards from the dead bird. This, on close examination, was found to consist of hundreds of parasites, which were already leaving the body, whence no more subsistence was to be drawn by them. How did these minute forms of life, which were only to be recognised by the aid of a pocket lens, know in such a short space of time that dissolution had taken place, and that the remains were no longer a home for them?

On the 11th the swallows were seen in many places huddled together in groups of a dozen to fifty, to protect themselves by their mutual warmth against the piercing nor'-easter. In one large group a continual motion was going on, the birds at the top fluttering to the bottom, and forcing their way in, which of course forced others out, and so the struggle was kept up. In some places they were seen to fall from the roofs into the streets dead, and in many instances were so weak as to be frequently blown away, tumbled over and over by the force of the gale.

On the 12th this severe weather culminated, on the 'Fells' and throughout the Lake District of Cumberland and Westmorland, in a snow-storm of unusual severity, the snow in many places lying nine inches thick on the level. In the lowlands, or inside—as the sturdy dwellers under the Helm Wind's ominous bar call the low-lying ground between them and the sea—a hurricane of sleet and rain, accompanied by a gale from the north-east, visited that part of the district. During this spell of weather, which an old jingle says is 'neither good for man nor beast'—it might have added bird as well—not an insect was seen; and the poor swallows, unused to get their food in any other fashion than by taking it on the wing, were being gradually starved. This was forcibly brought under my notice on the morning of the 12th. While crossing a bridge over a 'beck' in the north of Cumberland, my attention was

drawn to the slow, feeble, and tame-like flight of some swallows—so utterly unlike their usual rapid gyrations—as they were passing through from one end of the bridge to the other, returning each time in a more listless manner. My first impression was that they were sheltering from the icy gale; gradually it dawned on me that there was no 'feed' on the brook, as anglers would say, and that the birds were starving. This was confirmed when, after waiting a few minutes longer, one of the birds trying to turn at the end of its journey, dropped into the water, and, with outspread wings, was carried over a weir and so out of sight. Simultaneously, another came floating from underneath the bridge, followed by several others in the short time I was looking on. Not far distant, and at the time this was happening, dead birds were being picked up on the lawn in front of a gentleman's country seat, till in the course of a few hours no fewer than sixty were found!

I interviewed several of our local rural postmen in the evening, and they all had the same pitiful tale to tell. The roads on their rounds were all strewn with the dead and dying 'Hirundines.' On the 14th I visited Rockcliffe, on the river Eden, and beneath the cliffs the ground was covered with the dead birds—*Hirundo rustica*, *Chelidon urbica*, and *C. riparia*, being about equal in number. They occurred all the way up the water-edge. The destruction must have been immense. I dissected several of the birds, and found that the crop was in every case entirely empty—the cause of death really being starvation, accelerated by the intense cold. Most of them were in beautiful plumage, but otherwise skin and bone. They were lying mostly with their heads to the bank, some under grass tufts; others, in the holes where pebbles had dropped out of the boulder clay; and others, again, on sandstone ledges, which here and there occur on the face of the 'scaur.' The birds were all in the same position as if they had simply settled down, folded their wings, and gone to sleep. The 'bluff' faces south-west, and was therefore well sheltered from the chilling wind. Of course, in such a position insects would fly the longest, so the bitter struggle for existence might last longer here than in more exposed situations. When I say fly the longest, I mean that the nor'-easter did not kill the insects, only drove what was flying into shelter, and prevented others emerging from the aurelia state. This may, I think, be safely borne out by the fact that there was no great diminution in warblers and other insectivorous birds; although on the Fells, 'stonechatters'—a name often used locally for three different species, namely, wheatears, whinchats, and stonechats—were found lying on the snow with outstretched wings, as if they had dropped in the act of flying. In their case the food was thoroughly covered over, except what might be found in the interstices of the stone walls.

But the birds frequenting the woods and coppices did not seem to have suffered any inconvenience, for the same cause which deprived the swallow tribe of food, possibly gave them more, driving the insects to the shelter of the budding leaves, where the birds' sharp eyes and inquiring ways would soon find them out.

It was some days before the full extent of the

disaster became known; but kind correspondents all over Lakeland, and numerous friends who sent me newspaper cuttings from the local press in this part of North-west England, all confirmed the sad news of the enormous destruction of the swallow tribe. At Bassenthwaite Lake Station, a colony of sand-martins two hundred strong were picked up dead by the platelayers; and numbers were seen to fall to the ground, having been forced to succumb to the rigour of the weather. One correspondent, writing to a West Cumberland paper in the dialect of the district, said: 'It was a pitiable thing to see see' a number o' swallows perishing in that storm. They wor fund in aw' kinds o' crevices aboot buildings, whoar they'd croppen in for sheltur, coald an' stiff. Thoo-sands hev perished in this way fra' t' combeyned effects o' coald an' want o' meat. For it's weel known these burds feed on t' wing; bit t' wind was seah strang they couldn't flee; an' than insecks warn't oot, an' they war deprived o' their food. Farmers an' gardeners are varry sworry for this, for they think 'at if a warm summer cooms, they'll be eaten up wid midge pests, an' hardly hev a single swallow t' help to lessen t' swarms. Ah know this, 'at they wad a gay bit rayder ha' seen some destruction amang t' sparrows, nor seen t' swallows destroyed.'

Hundreds of weakly lambs perished on the mountains; what must it, then, have been for the poor swallows, who fell by thousands? In the district round Annan, great numbers succumbed to the severe storm; many were found starved to death in cellars and other places where they had sought in vain for shelter from the biting atmosphere. Numerous instances were given of their entrance into houses, where they fell on the floor, too exhausted to be brought round by the kindly disposed. Near Plumpton, one man filled his hat with a cluster of perishing birds which had found shelter in some masonry. In a journey of thirty miles on the 20th, the writer did not see a single bird of the swallow kind; and the blank to one who has been accustomed to watch them with much interest was something indescribable. Many pleasant hours have I spent watching their marvellous flight, wheeling and gliding as they twist and turn in zigzag fashion, or flitting over the village pond, dipping in its placid water, and leaving dimpling circles on the surface of the pool, marking the course of their erratic gyrations; anon hovering above you for a second or two like miniature hawks, uttering all the while their soft twittering notes, whisking over the hedge into the green embowered lane, decked with flowering sprays of the woodbine and the rose. These 'guests of summer' lend an additional charm to the landscape. See them ascend to a considerable height above the tall elms, ceaselessly describing large, ever-varying circles round the tops of the trees, then descending like a rocket, with great velocity, a long, headlong dive, down, down, their plumage flashing in the sun—you would almost think they were going to dash themselves to pieces on the ground; then, with a sudden turn of the wings, darting off at a tangent, skimming away above the grasses in the flower-bespangled meadow till their infinite turnings and twistings are lost to view in the distance.

Often when sleepless, lying on my couch, anxiously waiting for morning, has the swallow's sweet little ditty, with its gurgling notes, cheered me from the eaves of my cottage; the birds keeping up the musical rhythm in a soft subdued tone, with slight intermission, for hours—now and then a low sweet prelude, gradually raising its song into a charming symphony. Frequently, too, in the dark, when everything else was hushed, the songsters seemingly waiting for the first gray streaks of dawn; but when the sun arises in all his splendour, they get more restless, and their notes are louder just before they dash down the village street to commence their labours for the day.

If 'dear old Gilbert White' had been living when this dire calamity happened to the swallow tribe, how he would have sorrowed and rejoiced over it—sorrowed that such a destruction should have taken place among his favourites—rejoiced that at last he could have settled that vexed question to him of their hibernation.

For some time after the storm not a bird of the swallow kind was to be seen; and only in a few villages bordering on the Solway did the swallow and house-martin ever appear to reach their usual numbers. The birds that filled up these vacant places must either have been later arrivals on their way farther north, who, finding plenty of room, stopped on their journey; or birds which were already in England, but had returned south, and so missed the storm. The first theory, I think, is the most plausible one, as it is well known that birds who go farthest north to breed are the last to arrive, and nesting quarters were not occupied in many cases till two or three weeks after—many, too many, unfortunately, never at all. Had the same birds come back, one would have expected to see them sooner than this.

Speaking generally, after repeated observations all over Lakeland, the 'gentle harbingers of summer' were conspicuous by their absence, and in the 'Fell dales' and villages in this part of North Cumberland, the summer of 1886 is still known and spoken of as the 'Swallowless Summer.'

A BUNCH OF WITHERED VIOLETS.

A BUNCH of withered violets!

I press them to my lips each day;

They bring before my tearful eyes

A vision that is far away.

Sweet dead memorials of a time

When Love was gracious unto me,

And all the bliss that earth could give

Seemed in this gift of flowers to be.

But now—why dwell upon the past?—

For some one else he cheers the hours;

I wonder does he ever think

That I still treasure his dead flowers?

WILLIAM COWAN.

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ON THE TABLE.

THERE are ancient inventories and other manuscripts extant that give us very interesting information about Tables. To go no farther back than the reign of Charlemagne, we learn that that monarch possessed three silver tables and a gold one. One silver table was square, and upon it was delineated the city of Constantinople; the second was round, and enriched with a view of the city of Rome; the third was formed of three circles, and was traced with a description of the entire universe. The gold table was ornamented with precious stones accented with the property of changing colour if poisoned food was put upon it.

An early vignette delineated in a ninth or tenth century Bible, preserved in the Paris Library, shows a semicircular table with a raised rim to it, and guests seated round the curved portion of it, some of whom are drinking out of long-necked bottles. There are no plates, no knives or forks, before them, and no cloth; but strewn on the table are bones, a salt-cellar, a loaf or cake, a dish raised on a stem holding a kid, and a large chopping-knife, with which that animal was evidently to be divided. The table rests on trestle-like supports, placed at regular intervals, which are partly hidden by festoons of drapery depending from the under edge of it. A twelfth-century manuscript preserved in the Strasburg Library shows a dining-table with the same kind of raised rim and the same absence of table linen. An additional implement is here depicted, of a nipper or pincer form, which must have been the forerunner of the two-pronged fork; but there is no indication that plates were used, except those on raised stems, which held the viands of which all were to partake. It was not, indeed, till the thirteenth century that plates performed any part in a banquet; before then, slices of bread did duty for them. At that date they were in use, but only sparingly, for one plate served for two guests, who were thus paired off; and tablecloths

were also then considered requisites. After a meal, it was the custom to remove the cloth and make use of the same table for amusements, such as chess and backgammon. In the old French châteaux, we are told, between the courses of a grand repast, on special occasions, performers mounted upon the table and recited couplets, or gave allegorical representations, or presented flowers to the guests. When the company was limited in number to a few persons only, long and narrow tables were used, one side of which was kept free for the attendants to wait conveniently upon those who were eating.

It was a long time before earthenware plates were used at table. Poor people ate off wooden plates and took their soup and porridge from wooden bowls. The middle classes used pewter; the very rich ate off silver plates. Silver dishes and silver dish-covers still hold their high place in the esteem of the wealthy; but the pewter plates of the great bulk of the middle classes are now almost curiosities, so completely within remembrance have they been superseded by inexpensive earthenware in all parts of the country. The use of wooden plates, too, only survives in the matter of bread-trenchers. Our mediæval ancestors were aware of the luxury of hot plates; and so that they should not burn their fingers in carrying them, resorted to the expedient of placing them on rings of metal, perforated in an ornamental way, and furnished with handles and feet.

As time passed by, good table linen became much esteemed. Some of the napery for dressers and buffets was bordered with velvet and gold and fringed with silk; and the white linen cloths for dining-tables were woven with representations of flowers, trees, animals, heraldic devices, and other objects, as in the present day.

From a very early period, table knives had a similar form to that now in use, in so far as they consisted of a wide and long blade firmly fixed in a handle. There were carving knives; bread knives to cut the slices of bread that were used to place the portion of each guest upon,

instead of plates; and, among others, oyster knives, over and above the cook's knives used in the kitchen. As the art of carving has ever been looked upon as an accomplishment worthy of a gallant's best attention, we cannot be surprised that considerable care has always been expended upon the means required. We gather from old inventories that knives were spoken of in pairs in the same way as we now mention a case or set of them. A pair of knives comprised not only two carving knives, but a bread knife to cut the indispensable slices of bread, and several smaller knives for game and poultry. An account of the silver plate of the kings of France tells us, too, that there were handsomer knives used on grand occasions than at ordinary times. Thus there is mention of a pair of knives with ebony handles for the season of Lent; and another pair with ivory handles for the Paschal feast; and a third pair gilded and enamelled for the feast of Pentecost. The vignettes of old French manuscripts depict the blades as being of various forms. One is shown to have been furnished with a termination, or point, that was almost crescent-shaped, evidently for the convenience of dismembering joints; others are straight on one edge and curved on the other; in some examples both edges converge to a point. The Museums of Dijon and Mans possess specimens that belonged to Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy.

Perhaps the earliest mention of forks occurs in an inventory of articles belonging to King Edward I. They did not come into use till the thirteenth century. Before that date people showed their good breeding in the manner in which they ate with their fingers, with the aid of a knife only, as we still do in the matter of bread and cheese. At first, forks appear to have been intended to be used in eating fruit only, probably to be quit of the discomfort of staining the fingers. We read of 'three silver forks for eating pears;' and again, 'a small fork of gold for eating mulberries.' They were small, and had but two prongs; and were richly ornamented, as became articles of luxury.

Old spoons had rounder bowls than those now in use, and their stems were short. The wooden spoons now sold at Russian fairs are of a similar form to those of the most ancient manufacture. Many people carried their spoons with them, as we now carry penknives, some of which were furnished with a perforation in the handle to admit of a string passing through them, and others with folding stems. Rich folks had their silver spoons then, as now. Less fortunate people used copper or pewter; and in museums may still be seen many examples in brass and gilded copper. The stems became in the course of time a vehicle for ornamentation; and eventually the twelve apostles were frequently represented as terminals for a dozen spoons. It was not unusual to carve spoons out of ivory and ebony, when the handles were also enriched with representations of personages and animals.

Salt-cellars, as the vignettes mentioned indicate, were placed on the table at a very early period; and they have always been a medium for the display of artistic taste. They were formerly furnished with covers, as mustard pots still are, and often kept locked with a key. They fre-

quently formed part of the contents of an ornamental receptacle placed on the table in front of the host, which contained also other articles required in the course of the banquet. One salt-cellar of fifteenth-century workmanship, in the Cluny Museum, is in the form of a man's head with a cap upon it. There is another example in the same collection, of a box form, enriched with a representation of the Annunciation on the upper side of the lid, and an illustration of the Crucifixion on the under side, with Latin mottoes attached. Sometimes they were furnished with tiny wheels in the manner of a chariot, that they might be easily passed down the table from one person to another.

Our old-fashioned tea-caddy seems to have been a survival of the receptacle mentioned above as containing various condiments. Down to the eighteenth century in France, it was customary to place upon the tables of people of rank a highly ornamental piece of workmanship, often in the form of a ship, in which were kept under lock and key everything likely to be required during the repast, including spoons, forks, napkins, cups, salt-cellars, and spices, and in some instances toothpicks. The wines were also kept locked up in small ornamental receptacles placed on the table. Seeing that sudden deaths were often attributed to poison, it is not surprising that many precautions were taken to prevent what was, perhaps erroneously, supposed to be of very common occurrence. French inventories make frequent mention of these table-ships. They were made of silver and of gold, enamelled and set with precious stones, with silken sails and rigging. One that belonged to a Duke of Orleans was made of silver, and around it were banners, which formed small doors, opening down on hinges and giving access to the contents. The deck was packed with armed men, whose escutcheons hung from turrets at each end of the vessel. Six lions crouching under the keel upheld it in an upright position on a flat stand. An inventory of Charles V. of Burgundy mentions twenty-one of these articles made of silver and four made of gold.

Cups and goblets and flagons also furnished a considerable part of the array on the table in old times, especially in high places. A beautiful ewer sent by a caliph to Charlemagne is preserved in the treasury of the abbey of St Maurice, and there are many specimens in museums. Formerly cups were frequently furnished with covers, and the person entrusted with the formality of tasting the wine, to prevent suspicion of poison, drank out of the cover. When a cup had a cover, a stem, and a foot, it became a goblet, and if large, a 'hanap.' The latter was considered the cup of honour. At one time two persons drank out of the same vessel, just as two ate from the same plate. In the inventory just alluded to, the cup and ewer of St Louis and the cup of King Dagobert are set down. There are forty gold cups mentioned, nineteen goblets, a dozen 'aiguieres,' or jugs, but only two hanaps.

Instead of dessert, or fruit, spices and sweetmeats were formerly partaken of afterwards. These were presented in richly ornamented receptacles, on trays or stands, in great varieties of forms. They were sometimes made of gold. One shown in a fifteenth-century manuscript in

the Munich Library is of an octagonal form, having turrets at each angle; it is raised on a low stem, and terminates in a foot, on which are eight dragon-like figures at equal distances. The cover is bowl-like, and is surmounted with an ornamental coronet, which serves for it to stand upon when placed upon the tray. There are two grotesque handles, with which it could be easily carried, and on the tray are two spoons, with which its contents could be distributed.

Froissart mentions the details of a banquet given to the king of Portugal by the Duke of Lancaster, at which the king, four bishops and archbishops, and the Duke of Lancaster, were seated at one table; whilst other dignitaries, barons, abbots, and ambassadors were placed at two others; and the rest of the company at separate tables. He says: 'The dinner was great and handsome, and well garnished with everything; and a great gathering of minstrels plied their trade.' Olivier de la Marche tells us when a sovereign was present at a banquet the service, or waiting, was sometimes performed by nobles, who were often on horseback, and that 'entremets,' dialogues in verse, or pantomimes, took place in the intervals of the serving. The floor was strewn with flowers; and wax candles, some held by valets, and others placed on the table, afforded the necessary lighting. Down the hall were disposed buffets and dressers, which served to display the vessels of silver and silver-gilt, glass and enamel. The repast was announced by sound of horn. On its conclusion, when the tablecloth was removed and games commenced, spices were served, not as part of the feast, but as we now serve coffee. It was not till the sixteenth century that fruit was eaten after a repast.

There were square tables, horseshoe-shaped tables, and round tables in the days of old, as well as the oblong ones mentioned. There were also single-stemmed tables. A vignette in a manuscript copy of the *Chronicles of Louis XI.* shows a square table with a single stem descending into a circular foot.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XIII.—SAHIB GEORGE.

WHILE Isabel was thus occupied with the discovery of her father, the two young men down in Lancashire, whose hearts she had set afutter and aflame—her cousin George and Alan Ainsworth—had begun to apply themselves, each in his way, to the task of winning her. Ainsworth, on his part, had exerted himself to find a post in London, and had succeeded with a celerity that surprised him, at the same time that it flattered his vanity; for he could not but think that his own deserts had much to do with his quick success. He did not then know, nor guess—though, when he did know, he was properly humbled and chastened in spirit—that the chief whose service he was leaving, who was one of the best of men and editors, had really bespoken for him the place for which he had applied on *The Evening Banner*. All he was aware of in the excitement of the occasion was

that *The Banner* wanted him in London at once, and that his chief had generously agreed to let him go.

George Suffield, on the other hand, had resolved upon a course which the committal of all the Suffield business into his hands left him free to choose. He had the self-confidence and the stout grain characteristic of so many Englishmen, which bear their possessors bravely through supreme difficulties of war, administration, and trade, but which cause them to blunder egregiously in the delicate business of love. George did not hesitate for a moment to believe that he would prevail on Isabel to be his wife, that his desire and his will must overbear all her scruples and doubts; he therefore wasted no time in vague longings, in downcast speculations as to ways and means of making himself more agreeable to her: he meant to marry her, to keep loyally his promise not to trouble her with his addresses for a time, and meanwhile to prepare such a position for her as could not fail to fill her and himself with joy and pride. The Suffield business was big, but he would make it bigger. The dear old dad—bless him!—had prospered exceedingly in the good old jog-trot ways; but his son was born into a sharper, adroiter—perhaps, less scrupulous—time, when a fortune might be made at a stroke, and he was resolved to lose no advantage which the turning of the wheel of trade might offer him.

It chanced that Fate had just then placed at his elbow a subtle, insinuating adviser to tempt him into risky ways. An unusual adviser—an unlikely adviser, many might think—but all the more dangerous a tempter for his being unusual and unlikely. Daniel Trichinopoly had been taken into the service of the firm, apparently; in reality, he was attached to the person of young Mr Suffield, much as he had been to that of the Sahib Raynor. There was nothing of the firm's usual business to which he could be set, but he lightly and easily slipped into the place of personal attendant and deferential and confidential retainer to the Sahib George. And George was more than pleased. He was of a generous and magnificent nature; it did not trouble him that Daniel did little or nothing to earn the emolument conferred on him; it was enough—indeed, more than enough—that he flattered him by his subservience and added to his feeling of consequence by his dark and inferior presence. Daniel put on a lavish show of obsequious admiration and affection, and George patronised and protected him. George suggested that since Daniel was to go in and out with him among the throngs of men, it would be well if he dressed more in the English mode—he would give him wherewithal to array himself properly; and Daniel humbly crossed his dark hands on his white guileless bosom, and professed the extremest desire to please a master who was great and good, strong, and beautiful—the heavens, said Daniel, were wide, but they were not wider than the beneficence of the Sahib George. So Daniel dressed himself in English attire—dark trousers and a loose alpaca coat—all except his head, on which he still wore the blameless turban, and was thenceforward assiduous in his service and in his flattery. He looked after the clothes of Sahib George; he waited upon the Sahib George

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at table and cooked rare little dishes for him; he fetched and carried for the Sahib George, and, like a faithful dog, was always found at heel when wanted either in the house or in the works or in the office in town; and constantly he dropped the insidious word in season into the Sahib George's ear. George had a vast opinion of his own shrewdness and judgment, but in reality he had much of his father's simplicity. He had a kind of large, open contempt for Daniel, and he would have been amazed and indignant if an acute observer had hinted that his black henchman was beginning to exert a prodigious influence over him; yet the extent of Daniel's influence even in the first week of his service may be judged from the following.

There had been supplied to the Suffield mills by a Liverpool broker sundry bales of American cotton which when opened made George swear, not loud, but deep: not only was the cotton of inferior quality, but the weight was made up by stones and other foreign rubbish packed in the midst of the bales. He exclaimed, in the hearing of Daniel, against the villainy of American shippers and Liverpool brokers both.

'With regard, Sahib George,' said Daniel, in his childlike humility, 'why the Sahibs of the great English mills do they use much-much American cotton? I beg to try to understand, but the same time I must say I am not able. I have think very much, but—no—it is not for the scarcity of fine and pure cotton stuff non-procurable. The native coolie of India, my own people—oh yes!—they grow much-much cotton. With regard, Sahib, why the English Sahibs buy they not very much the cotton of their own great India? I beg to understand.'

George answered carelessly that not very much Indian cotton came into the market, and that what did was short and dirty: the fact was, he knew very little about it.

'With regard, Sahib,' asked the simple Daniel, 'do he also have big stones in the middle of him? I beg to understand.'

George did not know. But the effect of Daniel's words was that George resolved to inquire concerning Indian cotton the next time he visited Liverpool, and that was after two or three days.

It was thus that George Suffield set out upon his independent and aspiring course; and he was in that mood when Ainsworth chanced to meet him on the very last day of his Lancashire sojourn. Ainsworth had said farewell to *The Lancashire Gazette* in the morning betimes, and had arranged to travel to London by a late train, intending to spend the interval with a college friend who was a journalist in Liverpool. He was thus in Liverpool in his friend's company at the hour of lunch. His friend proposed to entertain him at a club whither resorted at luncheon-time many representatives of Liverpool commerce—Liverpool shippers and Liverpool brokers, especially brokers. When they entered the dining-room of the club, Ainsworth discovered George Suffield occupied at one of the tables with three or four men. George did not see him, and he, remembering how they had parted at Whitsuntide, made no show of acquaintance with George. When they had withdrawn to the smoking-room, however, a hand was laid on

Ainsworth's shoulder and a cheery voice spoke in his ear: the hand and the voice of George Suffield.

'Who would have thought of meeting you here, Ainsworth?' he exclaimed. 'Not that you haven't as much business to be here as any one else, but I should have thought you'd be occupied with your paper at this time of day.'

Ainsworth introduced him to his companion, and said that he was done with *The Lancashire Gazette*, and was going to London that very night.

'Oh, indeed!' exclaimed George. 'You must come and dine with me—that is, if you have nothing better to do.'

Ainsworth answered that he doubted whether he could wait in Lancashire for dinner; he intended to travel late, but not so late as to preclude his reaching London and a hotel before midnight. While he spoke, he noted that George Suffield's eye wandered to a centre table, on which stood a rough deal box, and about which members of the club kept coming and going more and more with a subdued hum of talk and occasional bursts of laughter.

'What is going on there?' asked Ainsworth, looking from George to his friend.

His friend answered that he did not know, and rose to look.

'It's something of mine,' said George, with a conscious blush. 'I put it there. It's merely a joke; but I wish to show them—the cotton brokers, I mean—that that kind of thing shouldn't be allowed to happen too often. By Jingo!' he said, 'somebody's writing on the box!'

Somebody was writing in large chalk letters on the side of the open box—writing something which made those who read it shout with laughter.

'Let's see what it is,' said George, going to the table.

Ainsworth went with him, meeting his friend, who laughed, and said: 'It's not a bad joke.' This is what Ainsworth saw: in what appeared to be a large starch box was a big stone, on which was pasted a written label—'Specimen of Messrs Jones's middlings'—and on the box itself had just been written in chalk—'Specimen of Messrs Suffield's size-box.' Ainsworth was sufficiently acquainted with the terms of Lancashire trade and manufacture to know that 'middlings' meant bale-cotton of average good quality; and that size was the stuff with which manufacturers liberally dressed their webs to give their cotton cloths and calicoes more apparent substance. So he understood, and laughed: George Suffield had got *quid pro quo*, a Roland for his Oliver.

'So this is your joke, is it, Suffield?' said a little man coming and looking grimly on the small boulder.

'Yes, Jones,' said George. 'And this'—pointing to the chalk writing—'may be considered your joke: it has been made for you. So we're quits.'

Mr Jones smiled wryly, but he said nothing; and George returned and sat down with Ainsworth.

'They laugh,' observed George in confidence, 'but they don't like it: I can see they don't. Of course I know it's not they that put stones and old iron and rubbish in the bales to make weight;

but they are responsible: they should keep their shippers in order. No; I can see they don't like it. But that doesn't matter. I can do without them better than they can do without me. I can ship my own cotton if I like; and I will!—And you are going to London to-night, Ainsworth? I wish you could stay and dine with me.'

Thus he continued, trying to show interest in Ainsworth, but continuing to be excited and occupied with the effect of his joke practical on the cotton brokers. Presently there appeared on the opposite side of the street, looking up at the window where they sat, a black man in a white turban. Ainsworth noticed him first.

'Is not that,' said he to George, 'the black fellow that was Mr Raynor's servant? I suppose he is in your service now: he is looking as if he wished to attract your attention.'

Daniel was in fact smiling and smiling with a gentle inclination of the head.

'Yes,' said George; 'that's Daniel. He is my servant now; a useful, faithful creature,' said he with a pointed smile, which obviously meant: 'You suspected him once, but we won't return upon that. I think he must have something important to tell me. Excuse me a minute.' In a little while he returned in haste, and said: 'I find I must say "Good-bye:" there is some business I must attend to on the Flags;' by which name Ainsworth knew the quadrangle of the Exchange was meant. 'I daresay you'll be seeing the governor and all of them soon. Remember me to them. Bye-bye.'

That was the last Ainsworth saw of the triumphant George, and the picture dwelt in his memory.

In an hour he was walking with his friend to the Central Station. As they entered upon the platform, a group of three strange creatures arrested their attention: Daniel Trichinopoly in his white turban and his black alpaca coat, underneath which shone his red cummerbund; a Parsee, fat of feature and of form, topped with his notable brimless Parsee hat; and a grotesque, hideous creature in ordinary English dress, whose face made one think he must have been buried and dug up again when partly decayed, and whom Ainsworth's friend recognised as a Greek or Levantine, well known as a frequenter of the Flags. They were engaged in serious converse; and Ainsworth wished that George Suffield could see them so; for even the best of men may desire to show himself justified in his suspicions, to say, 'Didn't I tell you so?'

'Don't they look a sinister and villainous trio!' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'Did you ever see three men together that looked like a conspiracy of evil! What are they talking about, I wonder? Something wicked, with money in it, I'll be bound!'

His friend suggested that the man in the white turban looked a simple, honest, good-natured creature.

'Look at that hard, glittering eye!' said Ainsworth. 'It's as cruel as a snake's! I should not be surprised to discover he was the greatest scoundrel of the three. I dislike the looks of the others, but I distrust him upon instinct!'

So he entered the train and returned whence he had come in the morning. When he left the train, he did not need to leave the station, for

his luggage was already there in waiting for his journey to London. He turned on the platform to survey his fellow-passengers, wondering if the wearer of the white turban was among them. He was—along with the fat Parsee.

'It is odd,' said he to himself as he saw them walk away together, 'that that is the very combination I guessed when I saw the turbaned scoundrel in Suffield's mill.'

THE MUTTON BIRD ON THE FURNEAUX ISLANDS.

THOUSANDS of birds, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions, nay, hundreds of millions! A mighty host which cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude, crowded and massed together into one enormous swarm, darkening, like a thunder-cloud, the evening into black night before its time. Sheets and clusters of birds! of whom an eye-witness wrote some fifty years ago that he had 'actually sailed through them from Flinders Island to the Heads of the Tamar—a distance of eighty miles.' Birds, too, that are good for food, that taste so deliciously when cooked that a Bishop has lately written of them, 'Boiled or roasted, they are a dish to set before a king.' Birds whose feathers make the most perfect beds; and whose eggs supply the needs of hundreds of 'them that are afar off upon the sea,' or that dwell near the shores they frequent. Birds that excavate burrows instead of building nests; that, having made their curious homes, seem to desert them for weeks, as if the ten days' labour they have devoted to such an unbird-like occupation had been in vain, or a mere pastime. Birds that arrive each year on almost the same hour of the same day of the same month, and yearly depart as regularly at their appointed time. Birds so valuable that of and from them has in one year been harvested, on a little barren, treeless hummock of only a few hundred acres in extent in our southern seas, a net result of ten hundred and twenty pounds in cash.

To tell something about these birds, something of their history and habits, and of the people who live and move among them, is the object of this paper; and it is hoped that words coming from remote antarctic regions will not be uninteresting to readers in those northern isles so fondly spoken of as 'Home' by members of the Anglo-Saxon race in all parts of the world.

In Bass's Strait, between Tasmania and Australia, is situated a fair-sized archipelago known as the Furneaux Group. The name recalls that of Captain Cook, for it was his second in command, Captain Tobias Furneaux, who, in the year 1773, when in command of the *Adventure*, touched at Van Diemen's Land, and first saw their apparently barren shores. They consist of three or four large and many smaller islands; Great or Flinders Island, the principal, being best known as the place to which the harassed aborigines were sent, after having been driven into a peninsula of Tasmania by nearly the whole white population of the country, in the year 1830. Barren, Hummock, and Clark Islands rank next in size. These large islands are hilly, and grow timber, and cattle graze in moderate numbers upon them. Towards the

south-west of this group, and consequently nearer the mainland of Tasmania, are situated several smaller islets, known as Big and Little Dog, Green and Little Green, Babel Islands, &c. All of these last named are low and sandy, and are covered with a coarse kind of grass growing two or three feet high. Very little timber—no more, in fact, than a few scrubby bushes—can be found upon the islands, which, devoid of natural beauty, are inhospitable in appearance, tame, and dreary to a degree. Their inhabitants are chiefly half-castes, the offspring and descendants of European whalers and convicts and native women. These people are generally known as 'sealers,' from an occupation they formerly carried on to a considerable extent, and even now occasionally pursue, when a remnant of the once numerous flocks of seals revisits their ancient haunts.

But it is neither with men nor seals we have now to do. We desire rather to give some description of a curious ornithological subject, one which, even in regions where *rari aves* obtain, may be looked upon as amongst the strangest and most interesting of the fowls of the air and the sea. It belongs to the petrel family, and is commonly known as the Mutton Bird. In appearance it resembles a small wild duck, except that the bill has in a slight degree the turned over-hook of most sea-birds. It is of a sooty-brown plumage—hence sometimes called the Sooty Petrel, and the sexes are externally indistinguishable. The egg is pure snow-white, two and three-quarter inches long by seven-eighths of an inch broad. The white or albumen forms an unusually large proportion of its contents. 'It is remarkable,' says Gould, 'that a small part of both the yolk and the white remains soft and watery, however long the egg may be boiled.' The food of the full-grown Mutton Bird consists of shrimps, small crustacea, and molluscs; the young live chiefly on grass and sea-weed.

The peculiarities and habits of these birds seem first to have been noticed and described by Flinders, when he and Bass made the celebrated voyage which resulted in the discovery of the strait between Tasmania and the Continent of Australia, since called after the latter. On December 9, 1798, Flinders writes: 'After rounding the north-east point of the three hummock land, our course westward was pursued along its north side. A large flock of gannets was observed at daylight to issue out of the great bight to the southward; and they were followed by such a number of sooty petrels as we had never seen equalled. There was a stream of from fifty to eighty yards in depth, and of three hundred yards or more in breadth. The birds were not scattered, but flying as compactly as a free movement of their wings seemed to allow; and during a full hour and a half, this stream of petrels continued to pass without interruption at a rate little inferior to the swiftness of a pigeon. On the lowest computation, I think the number could not have been less than a hundred millions; and we were thence led to believe that there must be in the large bight one or more inhabited islands of considerable size.' He adds in a note the calculation by which he arrived at the estimate of their numbers—thus: 'Taking the stream to have been fifty yards deep by three hundred in width, and that it moved at the rate

of thirty miles an hour' (Gould says they fly as fast as sixty miles an hour), 'and allowing nine cubic yards of space to each bird, the number would amount to 151,500,000. The burrows required to lodge this quantity of birds would be 75,750,000; and allowing a square yard to each burrow, they would cover something more than eighteen and a half geographical square miles of ground.'

In the History of Tasmania written by the Rev. John West, and published in that colony in 1852, it is stated that 'the sooty petrel or Mutton Bird occurs in immense flocks in Bass Strait. This bird burrows in the ground, forming what are called by the sealers in the Strait "rookeries," and a considerable trade was at one time carried on in their feathers, eggs, and salted bodies.' Gould in his monumental work on the *Birds of Australia* gives a full-sized coloured engraving of the bird, and a lengthy description of its habits, chiefly compiled from the remarks of Mr Davies, published in 1846. He states that the bird is an inhabitant of all the Australian seas, but is nowhere known to exist in such countless numbers as about the Furneaux Group.

Their habits may be thus described. About the commencement of September the birds congregate, and in the middle of that month, during the night-time, come in to the islands in order to prepare their nests. This they do by scratching away the sand with their feet, casting it behind them in clouds, until a small tunnel or adit is made sloping downwards into the soil to a depth of from two to three feet, in appearance and size something like a rabbit burrow. It takes them ten days to open these temporary homes or 'rookeries;' and when finished, every bird flies away again, leaving the place absolutely deserted. They then remain at sea from five to six weeks, never doubting that their rookeries will be in the same order on their return as when they departed. On or about the 20th of November, as the sun sinks into the sea, a few arrive; but it is not until four days afterwards that any great number reach the nursery. On the night of the 24th the real incoming takes place, and flocks of them are seen making for the islands from every quarter. They continue to fly about for nearly an hour, and ultimately settle. Each burrow has an inmate, sometimes two, occasionally three female birds nestling within it. Many cannot find cover, and have to remain amongst the grass. The noise and confusion that follow are frightful; but as night darkens, stillness prevails. In the morning the male birds fly away before the sun is fully up, returning in the evening, and on every evening, to feed their mates, who remain on the nests until the chicks are hatched. Shortly after they are hatched, the young birds are left in the burrows, both parents being absent all day, but bringing back food at sunset, and resting every night on the land until the new brood is strong enough for flight.

The return of the parents every evening is one of the most wonderful sights on earth. As the rays of the setting sun fade, and the short inadequate twilight of our Australian climate faintly illuminates the gloaming, an observer on a slight eminence is startled to hear the sound of some object rushing swiftly through the air, and is just able to observe a solitary petrel, truly sooty now,

dart straight across the gloom direct to its lowly home. Hardly has it passed when the air is black with pinions, and the partial obscurity becomes deeper as an innumerable company of birds rushes mysteriously from the darkening sea towards the darker earth. So dense is their mass, that, as a writer who saw them in 1839 says, 'night is ushered in full ten minutes before the usual time.'

In a paper read before the Royal Society of Tasmania, Dr Montgomery, the Anglican Bishop of that colony, gives a vivid account of the impression left upon his mind by this home-gathering. He has been called by duty to these remote islands; and he admits that while he was prepared to be interested in studying the mutton birds 'at home,' the reality far surpassed his expectations. 'Just at sunset,' the Bishop says, 'I was invited to go some two hundred yards up on to the higher ground—the island is only two hundred acres in extent—in order to see the birds come in. I shall never forget that evening as long as I live. The sun was setting, leaving a broad belt of crimson on the western horizon, and soon the surrounding sea became invisible. Not a sound was heard except the rustling of the grass in the wind. There was no indication that there was a living thing on the island. There were no cries of sea-birds. The stillness was wonderful. Presently, a single dark-winged form flitted across the island and vanished again into the gloom. In another ten seconds thousands upon thousands of birds seemed to spring like magic up out of the darkness from every quarter, without warning or cry of any kind. And now, backwards and forwards before my dazzled sight, I saw these countless dark shadows shooting with lightning rapidity athwart the last of the evening light. Still no articulate sound was heard. Nothing but the whistle as if of bullet after bullet through the air, bewildering one with the sense of numbers and of mysterious rushing life. Repeatedly a bird would dash within an inch of my head, and then wheel like lightning to one side to escape a collision. The minutes passed, and still this dizzy, whirling hurlyburly of creatures continued—silent and even awe-inspiring. Sometimes they came in squadrons of hundreds, sometimes by tens. But still they came, each bird, after a turn or two, sinking with unerring instinct on to its hole, finding it in the long grass and darkness with a certainty which was truly marvellous. It was difficult to tear one's self away from this wonderful spectacle. But at length we returned to our tent, pitched near the water's edge, but still among the bushes; and all night long, as I lay trying to sleep, I heard the cooing and cackling of innumerable birds feeding their young in their subterranean homes, some of them apparently within a yard of my ear. At length I fell asleep; and before I awoke, at six o'clock in the morning, there was not a bird to be seen on the island.'

The half-castes come to the island just before the birds, bringing firewood and water with them from Flinders Island. They collect eggs first, then they catch some of the old birds; and the way in which they trap them is peculiar. The petrel cannot fly from the ground. He must either get on a projecting edge of rock to start his flight, or rise from the water. From the

sea-shore to his burrow he makes 'tracks'—that is, the ground is trampled and hardened into narrow paths. Taking advantage of this, on some favourable night the trapper blocks up the greater number of the pathways and digs pits across the remainder. Unable to proceed by those that are obstructed, the birds crowd into the open tracks, and reaching the pits unexpectedly, tumble into them, and are suffocated by the crowds of their fellows who follow. But it is the young bird when a few weeks old that is captured as being the most delicate food. He is very fat—almost, indeed, all fat—and after being spitted before a fire, is a truly exquisite morsel. Dr Montgomery says: 'That the young fresh birds are delicious eating I can testify. They taste like a very fresh herring, as we know that fish in the old country.' The half-castes salt and export them, or sell them to trading schooners, &c. They are unquestionably nutritious when thus treated, and are said to be as healthful for delicate persons as cod-liver oil. These fowlers do very well during the season; a man and his family can earn about four pounds ten shillings a day for nine weeks, spending nothing, and living entirely on the birds all that time. As well as the salted birds, eggs and feathers are also collected and sold.

Unfortunately, by leasing some of these small islands to settlers, the Government has taken a step that has done enormous damage to the birds, and may, if not checked, lead to their extinction. Through the culpable negligence or cruel thoughtlessness of the settlers, whole islands are becoming deserted. Gun Carriage or Vansittart Island is now absolutely abandoned by the petrel. This has been caused by turning bullocks on to the island. The cattle in roaming about for food—or, as an Australian would say, for 'feed'—trample on the burrows, and crush to death under their heavy tread many of the young birds, many more being smothered in the holes which are completely closed by the tramping of the beasts. This is much to be deplored, and it is to be hoped that grazing leases, from which but a paltry revenue is derived, will be done away with, and a close season for the protection of the birds for at least half the year enacted. We have stringent game-laws in Australasia, not against poachers—our game is free to any man—but against its destruction at the breeding season, and the Mutton Bird needs protecting as much as any other wild creature. Curiously enough they have not been left by nature absolutely without a protector, although one of an extraordinary kind. These low grassy isles abound in snakes, and every man, woman, and child you meet upon them is armed with a stick or gun with which to destroy these hateful creatures. But the snakes rarely touch the Mutton Birds, living, indeed, on mice and other small fry, which are also numerous. The snakes are not often found in the burrows, although it is recorded that a young girl of sixteen pulled two out in one day, when catching birds a year or so ago. How numerous they are may be judged from the fact that a Mr Smith, a half-caste, had all the snakes his party killed in one season thrown into a heap, and at the end of two months they numbered six hundred. There is, however, one island, Babel Island, where the Mutton Bird is rendered secure

against mankind owing to the enormous quantity of snakes that exist upon it. Even these hardly sealers dare not visit it in quest of them, although quite a fortune in birds and eggs might be garnered there. In that place, thanks to the serpent, the sooty petrel lives and breeds in peace. Surely it would be possible to ordain that on many another rookery a similar state of things might be brought about without the intervention of the dreaded snake.

BY ACCIDENT.

CHAPTER III.

THUS with kaleidoscopic rapidity was the course of Dick Marsden's road through the world changed. His was indeed a strange position. By his uncle's death he inherited an income of over two thousand a year, and was at once ranked amongst the envied ones of the earth. And yet this position he would have to share with a low-born, ill-educated, almost depraved woman, with whom his sole bond of union was the marriage certificate of a country registrar.

During the past two years, when the glamour of his ill-considered passion had been rudely dispelled by the world into which he had descended, Dick had drifted into a condition of lifeless, aimless despair. He had been obliged to work, and to work hard, for the allowance which his uncle made him was merely nominal, the old gentleman being under the impression that his nephew, who turned up so regularly on Thursdays in Portland Place, well dressed and smiling, was making a good income by his pen; but he worked with about as much heart and enthusiasm as the galley-slave chained to the oar.

He first resolved that he would make Leah an allowance, and give her leave to go where she liked and do what she liked; but upon reflection, better counsels suggested themselves to him. He was a philosopher as well as a gentleman. He was married to this wretched chanter of spicy ditties at a fifth-rate music hall, and the heart which should have been a wife's was in the keeping of another. Still, Leah was his wife, and it was his duty to make the best of a bad bargain. Here his philosophy showed itself. The gentleman came out in his resolution, now that he was in an independent position, to lift the girl as nearly to his own level as he could, to soften and refine her if possible.

Before, however, finally arranging his course of life there were two duties to be performed. The first was to see Marian Akhurst, and to tell her his secret. The second was to send Seth Hearn, his father-in-law, about his business. He wrote to Marian, and asked her if she could meet him, as he had an important communication to make, and he named Regent's Park as their place of meeting. There, in one of the least-frequented alleys under the trees, bare and leafless, but aglow with winter sunlight, they met. Dick eagerly scrutinised her face as she advanced to meet him, for he feared what her feeling would be upon receipt of such a request. It was calm and smiling as ever, the cheeks pale, and a strange, inquiring look in the eyes.

'I am going to unburden my mind to you, Marian, of the secret which has kept me apart from you, ay, and from the world, during these past two years,' he said. 'It will shock you, I fear, and, under ordinary circumstances, I would tear my tongue out rather than shock you. But you must know.'

The girl looked imploringly into his face. He was silent for a few moments, for he knew not how he could strike with so terrible a blow the gentle creature at his side. But it had to be struck, and procrastination would not soften its fall.

'Marian,' he said, 'I have been married for two years.'

'Dick!' was all the girl could cry; but the name was gasped out with an emphasis which was half agony and half incredulity.

Then he told her the brief, sad story of his infatuation for the stately young gipsy girl who had acted with him at the Snuggery, and of the terrible price he had paid for what he had deemed the realisation of his dream of happiness. He made no excuses: he did not lament his fate; he did not decry the woman who was as a millstone round his neck, for he knew that she who listened to his bare relation of facts could supply the tints and shades required to complete the picture.

For some moments she walked by his side in silence. Then she said gently: 'I am sorry, Dick, not because you are married—God forbid that I should be so selfish—but because of the unhappiness it has caused you. Your story is no strange one; I hear it often and often, so that I seem to know every detail of it without your telling me.'

'And now that I have told you, Marian,' said Dick, 'do you wonder that I never told you before?'

'You did what you thought was best for your uncle's sake, did you not?' said the girl.

'Yes; I *dared* not tell him, and I *dared* not tell you,' said Dick. 'I don't believe it would have changed him towards me; but I know it would have grieved him to the heart. I did not tell you, because—because I knew what you thought of me, and I dreaded the result. But you will always be my friend, Marian? I shall need friendship now as much as ever I did.'

'Dick,' said the girl, 'I will never change towards you. But I am sorry—so sorry for you. I do hope *she* will be a better wife to you in your better circumstances, for you deserve the best a woman can give you.'

They walked on a few minutes longer, and then separated.

Dick's next duty was to arrange matters with Seth Hearn. That gentleman, who of course very soon became informed of the turn things had taken for the better, was very much to the fore, and eagerly volunteered his aid, assistance, and advice in any matters in which Dick should command him, marking his intention of associating himself intimately with the arrangements to be made by the constant use of the pronoun 'we' in connection with them.

Dick, however, at once disabused him of all misunderstanding. 'Now, Mr Hearn,' he said, 'let us understand each other at once and for all. I've put up with your interference with my

domestic life during the past two years for the sake of my wife. Now, you can go, and I see no further occasion for our meeting again.'

Hearn, who had been fortifying himself against possible unpleasantness, staggered at first, but soon recovered himself. 'No, no, Dick!' he said. 'You don't mean that. Separate a father from his only child! Turn an old man out into the cruel world! No; I think too well of you to believe that. Me and Leah can't be separated; the poor child would fret; I know she would.'

'Not she! I mean what I say, Mr Hearn. She can go to see you, but set foot in my house you must not, and shall not. Now you understand me.'

The man gave him a look expressive of the utmost hate and contempt, but still he whined out: 'But, my dear Dick, you'll keep me. Mind, if I hadn't consented to my gal marrying you, she'd ha' been driving about in her broom with diamonds on long ago. But, says I, Mr Marsden's a gentleman, and it's a gentleman my Leah must have.—You'll make me a little allowance, won't you?'

'No, sir. You've done your share of making my life a burden to me, and I don't wish to have anything further to say to you.'

The man went out scowling and muttering, and Dick felt that he had not finished with him yet.

Dick Marsden chose for his new home the neighbourhood of the village of Bennington, to which allusion has already been made. He chose the locality as being particularly fitted by its quietude and remoteness for the successful carrying out of his scheme with regard to Leah, but said nothing to her about it until the house was ready for occupation.

'We shall live in London, I hope?' said she.

'No; in the country.'

'Far?'

'Fifty miles.'

'Fifty miles from London!' she exclaimed. 'That will be terrible. I shall fret myself to death. I've never been accustomed to it. Remember, I am your wife, and I should have been consulted.'

She did not speak passionately, not at all as she would have spoken about a similar proposal a few months previously, and Dick was astonished. But he was encouraged. Perhaps, after all, there was some true metal beneath the coarse dross of her manner.

'Am I to be separated from my friends as well as from my father?' she asked presently.

'Yes,' replied Dick, 'inasmuch as I cannot have them at my house.'

'But you will take me amongst your friends?' she asked.

'That—that depends upon yourself,' answered her husband. 'At present, no. At some future time, perhaps. My wife must show herself the equal of my friends.'

'Why didn't you think of that when you married me!' she exclaimed bitterly, but still not angrily. 'I married you because you were a gentleman, and because I expected to be treated as a lady. Now, I shall be a general laughing-stock, and all my friends will say: "Serve her

right for marrying a gentleman instead of knowing her position and keeping to it." Why did you go and marry me if you never intended me to show myself as your wife?'

Dick forbore from making the answer in his heart: 'Because I was a young fool.'

So Dick and his wife started their new life at the Grange, Bennington.

Weeks passed, and the young man saw that his intense endeavours to make Leah his wife in something more than name were not successful. The girl seemed to keep aloof from him, and all his efforts to live pleasantly and affectionately with her met with no response. She had now attained the object of her ambition, the command of wealth, and yet she was palpably unhappy. The idea of passing her life in this great, quiet country-house seemed absolutely to terrify her, and it was quite clear that she derived no pleasure from the society of her husband. Incurable restlessness and inability to fix her attention upon any pursuit for more than a few minutes, Dick ascribed to her semi-public training and bringing-up; but for certain new features about her nervousness, her sleeplessness at night, her habit of muttering to herself, he could not account. In vain he sought for a remedy. He offered to have music and drawing masters for her; he tried to interest her in country-life, in the garden, in the stables, in reading, but ineffectually.

Then he made a concession out of sheer pity for her condition—a condition into which of course he might blame himself for bringing her. He steadily refused to admit her father to the house, but he gave her permission to have some of her old friends down.

She was delighted, and for the first time since their change of fortune, showed anything like an approach to her old vivacity. In their company she became an altered creature, and although Dick could not bring himself to receive them himself in the person of host, he allowed her to play hostess with unstinted hand, and did not intrude his restraining presence upon them. To give Leah's London friends their due, they behaved themselves better than could have been expected from individuals of a class whose recreative notions are usually associated with excess of liberty of speech and action. They were slangy and noisy, it is true; and the rude janglings of the grand piano in accompaniment of unclassical ditties suggested irresistible comparisons in Dick's mind with the sweet old English ballads which Marian Akhurst used to warble after dinner in the drawing-room at Portland Place; but nothing went on which would bring actual discredit on the house; and the natives who were attracted to the gate on the high-road by the brilliancy of illumination, the festive sounds, and the vision through widely opened and unblinded windows of gaily attired ladies and animated gentlemen, pronounced the company at the Grange to be 'a rare good lively sort and no mistake.'

But not even did this great concession seem to draw husband and wife any nearer to each other. Dick tried hard to analyse Leah's feelings towards him. He did not think that they had changed for the worse—that is to say, from feelings of mortification and disappointment to feel-

ings of actual dislike. On the contrary, she really seemed to appreciate his efforts to make their union a substantiality, for she was quiet almost to submissiveness; she had lost her old freedom and sharpness of speech; she thanked him for little kindnesses and attentions, and she busied herself to the best of her ability in household affairs.

Still, there was a gulf between them; and between any other married couple, Dick would have called it the gulf fixed by a woman *afraid* of her husband. Leah never looked him in the face. To be alone with him for any length of time was palpably irksome to her. Her gaiety in his company was forced, and on more than one occasion when he spoke kindly to her she actually burst into tears. Dick then wondered if her separation from her father had anything to do with her unaccountable depression, and yet he remembered that in the old days of poverty the relationship between father and daughter had never struck him as being affectionate, although they invariably sided with one another against him.

Gradually Dick began to observe that a great change was being wrought in Leah's appearance, and that she whom he had married as a fine, handsome young woman, was in less than three months beginning to look old and haggard.

One morning he was surprised to see the doctor's carriage at the door. Leah had gone to bed early on the preceding night, and had not been down to breakfast that morning. Dick waited for the man, and took him into his study.

'I am glad you have asked me to come in, Mr Marsden,' said the doctor, 'for although Mrs Marsden asked me not to let you know that she had sent for me, I should have felt it my duty to inform you that she is in an exceedingly unsatisfactory state of body—and mind.'

'Mind?' repeated Dick.

'Yes; mind,' said the doctor. 'I don't like the constant craving she has for change, for distraction, for excitement.—Tell me, has she had a great trouble or disappointment lately?'

'Not that I know of,' replied Dick. 'She was disappointed when she married a gentleman to find that he was a poor one; and now that he is not poor, she may be disappointed at not being admitted into his circle of friends. But I can think of nothing else.'

'No; I don't mean that sort of disappointment,' said the doctor. 'I mean something mental rather than sentimental.'

'I know of nothing,' said Dick.

'Was she always like this?' asked the doctor.

'No; certainly not,' replied Dick. 'But, then, you see there was always an element of excitement about her professional life.'

'Hm! Well. Unless she alters her style of life,' said the doctor, speaking impressively, 'I will answer neither for her reason nor her life.'

'Good gracious!' exclaimed Dick, 'is it as bad as that?'

'Yes,' replied the doctor; 'she must live regularly; she must see few people. And—excuse me for asking such a question—has she any reason for being *afraid* of you?'

Dick started. The doctor had asked him the very question which Leah's peculiar attitude towards him of late had often prompted him to ask himself.

'Good God! no!' he replied—'not the shadow of a reason.'

The doctor shrugged his shoulders in a puzzled way and took his leave.

Dick rang the bell, and told the servant to ask Mrs Marsden to leave her friends for a few minutes and come in to him.

Presently Leah entered the study. On her face there was written inquisitive, almost fearful wonder. Although it was not mid-day, she was gorgeously arrayed. Her thick mass of black hair was gathered together with a diamond spray; her fingers glittered with rings. But the fire in her eyes was unnatural; and the mouth, regarding which Dick and many other golden youths had often raved in rhyme, was beginning to have that thin, drawn-out appearance which is one of the most reliable trademarks of the handiwork of Time and Wear.

'You sent for me?' she said, quite anxiously.

'I did, Leah,' replied Dick, leading her to his own chair and seating himself on the escritoire. 'I want to speak seriously and for your own good.'

The girl's face turned quite pale, and her two hands were knotted together so tightly that the finger-ends seemed to be buried deeply into the flesh.

Dick went on. 'The doctor has been here; he gives a very bad account of you.'

A sigh of palpable relief escaped the girl. 'Do you believe in doctors?' she asked.

'Not always,' replied her husband. 'But in this case I can see for myself that there is cause for anxiety. He says that unless you change your method of life the consequences will be serious.'

'Does he mean that I am going to die?'

'No—not exactly. You must lead a quiet, regular life, he says.'

'That would kill me; or it would drive me mad. May I have my father with me occasionally?'

Dick got off the table and walked up and down the room for a few moments in thought. 'I will see,' he said presently. 'But at anyrate all your friends must go.'

'Very well. If you insist upon it, they must. But if it had not been for them, I should have gone mad before now. I believe you mean well; but you both forget that I have been accustomed to a life of excitement, and that to take away excitement of some sort from me is like shutting a flower up in a cellar.'

'I understand you,' said Dick kindly, and taking one of her hands in his; 'but I want, Leah, to do the best for you. I really do, and perhaps after a while'—

The girl sprang up from the chair, and in an agony of sobs and tears rushed from the room.

The curative course commenced that day. The rabble of singers, acrobats, musicians, and hangers-on at the Shoreditch Music Hall departed by the evening train, and Dick explained to them that it was by the doctor's strict orders.

For some weeks the strangely assorted husband and wife were left to themselves; still there was no diminution of the symptoms so gravely accentuated by the doctor; and Dick became more and more forcibly convinced that the secret of

the girl's horror was, not of her surroundings, not of the change of life, but of *him*. She pleaded indisposition when he asked her to go out with him. She shut herself up for hours in her own room. She often rose from the dinner table when the meal was but half through. She was sleepless at night. She—the 'Stunning Gipsy Jane' of the music hall, the dashing *soubrette*, the bold, brazen-faced chanter of roaring ditties, the dancer whose steps had an *abandon* which was the delight of the East End, the unblushing hurler of chaff and repartee and slangy retort—started at sudden noises, changed colour when she was spoken to, and had the utmost horror of quiet and darkness. Gradually Dick noticed that the restlessness and feverish activity were being succeeded by dreaminess and lethargy; that her sleepless eyes had the peculiar, heavy look of one whose craving was for sleep; that her hand was unsteady, and that the swart olive of her complexion was changing to an unwholesome yellow.

He sent for the doctor, who shook his head gravely as he said: 'Constitutionally, there is nothing wrong with her; but the mind is killing the body, and she is taking opium to kill the mind. Mr Marsden, there is something at the root of all this *which she is concealing from you*, for it is contrary to every law and every usage of nature for a strong, healthy, young woman, as Mrs Marsden still is, to be sinking into the condition in which she now is.'

THE EXPLOSION OF KITCHEN-RANGE BOILERS.

THE winter is undoubtedly the most appropriate time to call attention to this danger that exists in our households, owing to the fact that although there are four distinct causes of such disasters, frost, which is one of them, takes precedence as being the most prolific of mischief. This article is not intended to be of an alarming nature, but to call attention to what precautions should be adopted, these precautions being of an ordinary and simple kind, and their adoption tending to make these somewhat rare accidents still more unlikely. That the danger does exist there is no denying. It is not often that its occurrence comes to our ears, but its infrequency is no excuse, as in fully half the instances it proves fatal to some one.

The kind of boiler that is accountable for the trouble under discussion is that which exists at the back of the kitchen-range fire, and is in connection with a system of pipes which furnish hot water for baths, &c., in different parts of the house. This boiler is sealed up, and the only outlet for steam—the expansive force which does the hurt—is in the form of an open pipe at the extreme top of the apparatus. There is another relief for any unusual force that may occur, in the cold supply-pipe, as, before an explosion could take place, the force would exert itself through this channel. This is assuming the regular safety-pipe referred to is closed. The danger, therefore, from frost is in its solidifying

the water in this safety-pipe and the cold supply-pipe. The same danger also occurs if the pipes in some other part of the apparatus are frozen, and so cut off the escape of steam by either of the exits named. In other words, there is pronounced danger if, during the night, frost so affects the pipes that when the fire is lighted in the morning any steam generated cannot escape. Steam, as every account of boiler explosions manifests, has enormous force, and it is merely a matter of time and firing to cause it to rend open a strong wrought-iron boiler, and then its effect is most disastrous to anything or any one that may be near.

From this explanation, and knowing how servants light the fires without thinking of frost or peril, it may naturally be thought that accidents might occur oftener than they do. It happens, however, that there are many things—trifling occurrences in themselves—which transpire to obviate danger; and there is no doubt whatever that, during a severe and lasting frost, there are numbers of range-fires lighted when it is almost suicidal to do so, and yet, strangely, seldom any casualty occurs. These incidental elements of safety are, providentially, rather numerous. Firstly, assuming the fire is lighted in ignorance that some dangerous stoppage by frost exists, the gradual heating of the water may cause the ice to melt. The water in the boiler and part of the apparatus cannot be heated to boiling-point and generate steam in a few minutes; and this heating operation, occurring as it does in the tubes in which the ice is, may cause the pipes to clear sufficiently to ensure safety. Secondly, some one may go to a tap, and the mere opening of this ensures relief, as it directly and freely communicates with the source of danger—that is, supposing the tap to be connected at a point below where the frost-bite is, as would probably be the case. Thirdly, upon opening a tap—and taps are being applied to frequently and at all times—the irregular issue of water would indicate something being wrong, and possibly no water whatever would run. With such obvious symptoms of danger as these, the fire would in nine cases out of ten be extinguished, and the possibility of an accident be avoided. There are several other minor things that may occur to ensure safety when highly dangerous conditions actually exist, and, due to these it is that disasters are of much less frequent occurrence than they might otherwise be.

The correct remedy for this state of things is to protect the pipes and apparatus generally from the effects of frost. This can easily be done at a moderate expense, and it will be shown that the results are decidedly conducive to economy and comfort in other ways. To protect the pipes from frost they should be covered wherever they are exposed with some material which has slight heat-conducting properties, and nothing exceeds for this in efficiency the hair-felt, which can be bought at any ironmonger's shop. Properly speaking, a hot-water apparatus of this character should be covered in every part, including the hot-water tank, to effectually prevent loss of heat. The object of the apparatus is to provide heated water at taps; and if the fire is devoted to

this end, it is unreasonable to dissipate the heat, especially where it is not required. In addition to the economy of conserving the heat, the practice goes far towards solving that constant problem, how to ensure a supply of hot water for early bathing, for when the fire is out the water does not cool very materially during the night. If we adopt this suggestion and conserve the heat in the pipes, we shall have no reason to fear frost; but this result can be greatly aided by leaving a fire at night. Doubtless, a number of people have left fires at night in kitchen-ranges with the view to prevent the water freezing, and also with the object of providing the early bath just referred to; yet this plan has not succeeded. The plan does not succeed unless a little care and judgment are used, for, unless it is arranged that the fuel be kept in a state of combustion, and does not go out during the night, failure must follow. The common cause of failure is leaving the boiler damper open. This ensures the water being heated while there is fire; but it creates such a brisk state of combustion that the fire goes out in an hour. It is overlooked what happens after the fire is out; the boiler flue being open, there is a rapid and continuous passage of cold air under the boiler, and this undoes all that the hour's firing has effected. To ensure a range-fire keeping alight a number of hours, the boiler flue must be tightly closed, and the oven dampers only be out sufficiently far to allow the smoke to pass away. Anything like a sharp draught must be avoided; and if small coal and cinders are put on at night, frost will have no serious effect whatever. The fire being in contact with the front plate of the boiler is sufficient to effect this result.

Now, there is another effect of frost to be guarded against, to which the precautions enumerated do not apply—namely, the total failure of water-supply to the house. This, although an active source of danger, is better understood, and is always obvious. It is doubtful if any one should light a range-fire where there is a circulating boiler, knowing that the water-supply is stopped. To do such a thing is highly dangerous, and it occurs in this way. After the water ceases to issue from the taps, there may be a little left in the boiler and a few feet of pipe; but this quantity is evaporated after an hour or so's firing. When the water has disappeared, the boiler becomes red-hot, and should a thaw set in, or water pass from any other cause into the boiler while it is in this state, the result would be an explosion of a terrific nature. A fire should never be lighted in a range of this kind when the water-supply has failed.

From this it will be understood that severe frosts require that attention should be given and precautions taken against their effect upon hot-water apparatus; but there are three other recognised causes that can be explained in their order of precedence as regards danger. The first cause is failure in the water-supply. This is not always due to frost. One instance known to the writer was owing to an extensive leakage which passed unnoticed, due to its occurring in a hollow wall. In country residences, a failure frequently occurs, and the wonder is that accidents are not more common; as the water-supply is usually provided for by an odd man's attention at a pump. It is

when a number of visitors cause an unusual demand for water that the cisterns are emptied. An excellent way of obviating this danger is by having the apparatus erected upon—or altered to—the modern 'cylinder system.' This system does not permit of the hot-water tank being emptied, so that when the water fails, there remain some forty gallons of water to be disposed of by evaporation. This would be an element of safety for many hours even if a large fire was kept going.

The next cause is stopcocks in the circulating pipes. It is not the insertion of one cock only in one of the pipes that is to be condemned; for so long as one pipe remained clear no accident could occur. It is the not infrequent practice of putting cocks in both pipes that is so bad, as it permits of the boiler being cut off from the steam outlet. The object of this practice is to permit of the boiler being emptied and opened for cleaning or repairs without withdrawing the water from the remainder of the apparatus. This is certainly a convenience, but only a small one, as the waste of the water is scarcely worth considering, and a large apparatus can be emptied within an hour. This practice fulfils no useful purpose, and in the hands of unskilled or careless people is an element of danger. About five years ago a plumber, a practical man, who was actually using the cocks, lost his life by forgetting to open them before he lighted the fire.

The last cause is incrustated deposit. As our readers who live in hard-water districts know, there is considerable deposit of a stone-like substance, carbonate of lime, inside boilers and pipes which have water within them and are subjected to great heat. The dangerous element is that the pipes may in course of time become totally stopped with this substance; but, fortunately, as the accumulation occurs it gives unmistakable warning a long time before it reaches a dangerous degree. If it were not for this, explosions from this cause would be quite common; but the warning is compelled to occur, and no one can overlook it. Consequently, it is doubtful if an accident from this cause has ever actually happened. The writer has made inquiries from many sources, but cannot trace such an occurrence. The warning that this accumulating deposit gives differs somewhat occasionally, but it is always in the form of violent noises and vibrations proceeding from the apparatus; and before any danger is to be feared, they are unbearable, and have to be remedied to put an end to the annoyance. When these noises are heard in an old apparatus and they gradually grow worse, it may be taken for granted that some part of the pipes—near the boiler—is becoming choked, and will have to be cleared or renewed.

In conclusion, there is the universal remedy for all the dangers to be suggested, which is an unfailing one—the provision of a safety-valve. A discussion occurred recently between several of our best authorities as to whether an accident had been known to occur where a safety-valve was provided. No such instance was known. Considering the little expense a safety-valve involves when the range is first fixed, and the terrible nature of the calamities it obviates, it ought to be compulsory to use it. We shall

perhaps have a little epidemic of explosions some day, and then the authorities may move; but it is to be hoped the epidemic may never occur, or that we may be prepared before the time.

GENTLEMAN GEORGE.

By REGINALD HORSLEY.

"GENTLEMAN GEORGE" is over the border, Sergeant.

'You don't say so, sir!'

'It's a fact. The chance you have been waiting for is come at last. He stuck up the bank at Rosewood and put a bullet through the manager's head. You knew that?'

'Yes, sir. 'Twas his first murder, I believe.'

'Yes, his hands were clean of blood up till then; but they all come to it some time if they are out long enough.—How long has Cardale been out?' Cardale was the almost forgotten surname by which 'Gentleman George' had been known in days gone by.

'Three years, sir,' I replied. 'Three years, good measure.'

'Ah! well, it is time he was stopped. I suppose he finds Victoria a trifle too hot for him after this rumpus, so he has crossed over to us for a while.'

'Is your information reliable, sir?'

'Quite. Foster saw him at Billabong yesterday, and wired.'

'Foster! Why didn't he take him, then?'

The Chief smiled. 'As well ask the bird why it did not catch the cat. No, no; there is only one man on our side I expect can do that.' And he looked at me and laughed.

'Meaning me, sir?'

'Meaning you, Sergeant Sparks.'

'I'm sure I'm much obliged, sir.'

'Well, then, see that you justify my good opinion.—But you have a wily customer to deal with, Sergeant. Three years out, by Jove! And those Melbourne side troopers are no fools.'

'I expect I've got my work cut out, sir.'

'I imagine you have.—Now then, off with you at once; get the latest description of the fellow from Foster, and follow him up. It will be five hundred pounds in your pocket if you take him.—And mind,' added the Chief impressively after a pause, 'mind, it is *dead or alive*. Report to me on your return.'

I saluted, and withdrew, and ten minutes later was galloping in the direction of Billabong.

Five hundred pounds! It was a big reward; but I tell the honest truth when I say that just then I thought more of the honour and glory of getting the man than the money. For three years the Victorian troopers had been after him, and the best of them had never come next to near him. Sometimes they might get a glimpse of him, but that was all; and once out of sight, George, who was every inch a bushman, could laugh at the lot of them. His mare was a flyer, too, a sort of Australian edition of 'Black Bess,' and the distances the two of them covered now and again were almost incredible. There wasn't a township in Victoria where the bank manager didn't live in dread of a visit from George; and there wasn't a newspaper in the country that didn't abuse the police for their failure to take

him, and get off leather-headed opinions as to the way in which it ought to be done. However, it never had been done; and for all their smartness, the troopers never had a show. I expect they were heartily sick of the very name of 'Gentleman George,' and heard of his crossing the border with no little satisfaction. I know I did, for I had heard so much about him that I positively ached to have a slap at him. And now I was actually out after him. No wonder I felt a trifle more excited than usual. If I could manage to nab him at the first try, what a feather that would be in the cap of the New South Wales police!

At Billabong I found Foster—in plain clothes. 'Why, what's up? Where's your uniform?' I asked him.

Foster grinned uneasily. 'Ask George,' he said.

'I will that,' I answered, 'if ever I come up with him. Do you mean to say he's got it?'

'He has so,' replied Foster ruefully; 'and my horse and saddle into the bargain.'

I roared, laughing. 'Well, I'm blest, if that doesn't beat cock-fighting,' I cried. 'Got your horse too. But where is his mare?'

'How should I know? Got a bullet in her somewhere, very likely. Anyhow, he was riding a sorry beast enough.'

'Tell us all about it,' I said.

'Well,' began Foster gloomily—for he was very sensitive to chaff, and this was not the first mistake he had made by a long way—'I was over at Rogers's about those sheep he lost last week'—this I knew to be Foster's euphemism for taking a drink, but I did not interrupt him. 'My horse was hung up outside,' he went on, 'and we were talking away, when, all of a sudden, in walks George as cool as you please. "Keep your seats, gentlemen," says he, laying a six-shooter on the counter; "keep your seats, or there'll be trouble." We kept 'em.'

'What! Were you not armed?'

'No. Why? All was quiet our way. I had no notion George was over the border till he dropped in on us.'

'It is always well to be prepared for surprises,' I said. 'Well?'

'Well, I recognised him at once, for I lived down his way before he took to the bush. Presently he stared at me. "Why, it's Foster," says he. "Hullo, Foster!"—"Hullo, George!" says I. "What's up?"—"You're the right man in the wrong clothes," says he; "they don't suit you a little bit. Take them off and hand them over to me."—"What do you mean?" says I.—"Well," says he, mighty polite, "I'm sorry to inconvenience you, but I'll trouble you for your uniform. That's what I mean."

'And you gave it to him?'

'What could I do? There was no use in swallowing lead for nothing.'

'What happened then?'

'He tucked the uniform under his arm, made Rogers give him a nobbler, which he drank off, filled his flask out of the bottle, and turned to the door.'

'And you let him go without a word?'

'Oh, I gave him words enough, you bet; but he only laughed; and when he got outside, he jumped on my horse, and says he: "I'll borrow

your nag as well, Foster, as you are so pressing." And with that he rode off.

I laughed again. "Well, he's a cool hand," I said. "Which way did he go?"

"North-east, in the direction of Forty Mile Creek," replied Foster; and proceeded to give me a minute description of the bushranger.

"Well, good-bye, old man," I said when he had finished; "I'll bring back your uniform with George inside it, I hope.—Meantime, I'd advise you not to talk too much "sheep" to Rogers, or you may come to grief. So long!"

"A mighty smart trick that," I thought as I rode along. "A trooper riding through a bush township is no such uncommon sight. I expect I'll have some trouble to strike Master George's trail." And so it proved during the next week, for, though I daresay I was often close behind him, and though I made the most minute and searching inquiries in the various townships I passed as to the appearance of any troopers who had preceded me, yet I never once got any satisfactory information, and I was beginning to despair of ever coming up with my man, when at last, and quite unexpectedly, I did so. "Clever Capture," the newspapers called it. Bosh! It was sheer luck, and nobody ever heard me blow about it. If it had not been for a piece of superb insolence on his part and a fortunate accident on mine, I might very well have missed him altogether.

It was about one o'clock one afternoon that I rode up to the homestead on Toomburra, the owner of which station, Mr Ingram, or "the Squire," as he was usually styled, I knew very well. I came in by the back way, and was riding towards the stables, when I noticed a horse hung up to a post by one of the outhouses. I glanced carelessly towards it as I went by; and then, as my eye took in the details, I jumped hastily out of the saddle, and hitching my horse to a sapling, ran hard across the intervening ground. My heart thumped against my ribs from excitement as I saw that my impression had been correct. The strange horse carried a regulation saddle and bridle, and bore the government brand! "Gently," I said to myself. "It won't do to jump at conclusions; this may not be Foster's horse after all." Then I examined the holsters. One was empty, but from the other I drew out a revolver—not regulation. I breathed more freely. "That's better," I muttered; "he's got the other on him for a certainty: I'll make sure of this one at any rate;" and I drew the cartridges and slipped the weapon back into its case. Then I went swiftly round to the front of the house and, sheltering myself behind the creepers which grew thickly over the veranda posts, peered cautiously into the dining-room through the open window. They were all there, the Squire, his wife and daughter, and a young son home for the holidays. But there was some one else, a strapping fellow in police uniform, whose features, as he sat with his back to the window, I could not make out. I don't know him from this side," I said to myself; "but he seems to be on capital terms with the Squire. What if I have made a mistake?" And then I remembered the pistol in the holster, and was comforted.

Making my way round to the back again, I

entered without ceremony, and going noiselessly along the passage, paused for a moment at the dining-room door. There I halted and looked in, and, in the rapid glance I shot at the handsome trooper who was evidently the life and soul of the party, I recognised, by certain peculiarities of feature which Foster had described to me, the man I was after, the redoubtable George himself. I took in the situation in an instant. "By jingo," I grinned to myself, "isn't he a daisy! What magnificent cheek!"

Just then—of course it happened in much less time than it takes to tell—the Squire saw me and jumped up with a loud outcry. "Sergeant Sparks!" he roared, upsetting his chair in the fervour of his hospitable greeting. "Bravo! Are there any more of you? We'll have the whole force here presently. Come and have some dinner. That's right." And he pushed me into a chair opposite the stranger, whose behaviour ever since my entrance I had carefully watched out of the corner of my eye. I must say it was remarkable. His face never changed at all, only I noticed that, as the Squire called out my name, his hand dropped from the level of the table to his belt. That was all: otherwise he sat perfectly still; and then, seeing that I took no manner of notice of him, he resumed his dinner and nodded pleasantly as the Squire, good easy man, with no notion of 'treason, plots, and stratagems,' introduced us to one another.

"You won't know Merton, I expect, Sergeant," he said. "He's from the Melbourne side on special duty."

Now, bluff is a game that two can play at, and, besides, I didn't want bullets flying round the room while the ladies were in it, so I answered quietly: "Indeed. Secret service?"

"Oh, dear no!" said my *soi-disant* comrade, in an extremely pleasant voice, and with an amount of manner which, if he really were 'Gentleman George,' plainly showed how he came by his sobriquet. "Oh, dear no! not at all. I'm out after 'Gentleman George' who skipped from our side after that shooting affair at Rosewood lately."

I wasn't ready for that, I confess; but I managed to keep a straight face as I replied: "Are you really! Then we can look him up together, for I am out after him too."

"Gad!" said the Squire, "he shouldn't get very far with two such claps as you after him."

"Ah," said my opposite neighbour, "I've heard of the prowess of Sergeant Sparks. Who hasn't? I think we ought to be sure of our man. Two hundred and fifty apiece, Sergeant, eh?" And he looked at me and laughed.

"Yes," I admitted carelessly, "if we get him. But I don't seem to hear the money jingling in my pockets yet, anyway. Do you know George by sight?" I continued, not looking at him, as I poured out a glass of claret.

"Ra-ther," he returned, laughing again. "Do you?"

"Unfortunately, no," I answered. "I've only a somewhat imperfect description to go upon. However, with your help"—

"And your own well-known cleverness," he complimented.

"Thanks," I said, smiling in a pleased fashion. "Well, we shall see. Have you been here long?" I added.

'No; I rode up just about dinner-time, and Mr Ingram insisted on my stopping. I bunked at Waratah last night.'

Fatal error! I lowered my eyes that he might not see the triumph that shone in them. Waratah was a station some five-and-twenty miles away, and I had spent the previous night there myself. I was certain of him now; but it was no part of my plan to let him see it.

The conversation grew general again, and I will say a better table-companion than Merton I never met. He laughed and jested, told a score of excellent yarns, and certainly no one could have suspected that he sat there with a price upon his head, and within a foot or two of a man who was sworn to take him dead or alive. I must admit I admired the fellow, he was so cool.

Presently there came a lull in the flow of talk, and Merton rose from the table. What a remarkably handsome man he was, and what a splendid chest and shoulders! I was not by any means a chicken myself, but I felt if we came to grips he would have the best of me. Therefore, I determined not to give him the chance.

'Excuse me, Mr Ingram,' he said; 'I'll just take a look at my horse and be back again directly.'

'Do you think of going on at once?' I queried.

'Well,' he returned, 'as I didn't know what might happen, I hung up my horse outside; but now that you have turned up, I'll stable him for an hour or so while we discuss the best thing to do.'

'Right you are,' I said; while to myself I added: 'Catch me letting you reach your horse, my fine fellow.' Then I went on aloud: 'I'll take the saddle off my beast as well.'

By this time he had reached the door, from which a long and narrow passage led to the back entrance. I let him get a little way before I rose, for I wanted him well in front of me, and then, after a hurried whisper to Mr Ingram, 'Sit still, Squire, whatever happens,' I bounded into the passage after my quarry. He had not suspected I saw through him, it was evident, so I was on him with the muzzle of my revolver pressed against the back of his neck before he had time to turn, even if it had occurred to him to do so. 'Throw up your hands!' I cried in a low voice. 'Quick! or I'll drop you in your tracks.'

He threw up his hands slowly. 'You are mad,' he said. 'What do you mean?'

'I'll apologise afterwards, if I'm wrong,' I answered. 'Meantime, keep up your hands.' As I spoke, I rapidly unclasped his belt, and threw it with the revolver in it as far behind me as I could. 'Now,' I said, 'march straight on, and'— But the fight was not out of him by any means, though I had him at such disadvantage. With extraordinary quickness, he ducked, and then, turning swiftly round, he struck upwards so fiercely at my right hand that the pistol exploded, the ball burying itself somewhere in the ceiling, as the weapon sailed through the air and dropped some yards behind me; while at the same moment I received a blow on the chest, delivered with such tremendous strength that I reeled right back into the dining-room.

The moment I got to my feet, I rushed after George, who had of course made good his escape by the back door and gained his horse. By the

time I got outside he was off, and I saw him sailing over the slip-rails like a bird.

'So long, Sparks, old man,' he shouted to me. 'You had a good try for it, but you won't collar the five hundred this bout.'

'Won't I!' I yelled after him wrathfully, as I flung myself on my horse.—'What's up?' roared the Squire, rushing madly out.—'Gentleman George,' I howled back as I popped over the slip panels and raced away over the flat on the bushranger's track.

George knew all about riding, I soon saw, for, short as was the start he had got, he made the most of it. We kept the same distance between us for about ten miles, and then, though I knew the pace was too hot to last, yet George's horse was fresher than mine, and I saw that I was losing ground.

'I must stop him,' I muttered. 'If once he reaches the Long Scrub, he'll dismount and get clear away.' So I shouted: 'Halt, George, or I'll fire.' I don't know whether he heard me or not, for he kept straight on; so I let drive at him. It seemed to me that he swayed a little in his saddle, but I could not be certain, and only those who have tried it know how difficult a thing it is to hit a mark when one is going at racing pace. Presently he reached for his holster and drew out the revolver I had replaced. He saw in a moment what had been done, and flinging the weapon aside with a violent gesture, he rode on for dear life.

And now the edge of the Long Scrub came in sight. I drove the spurs into my horse and sent him along for all he was worth. George heard my cries of encouragement, looked round once as a second bullet from my revolver whistled over his head, or buried itself in his body, I could not tell which, and with a yell of defiance, urged his horse into a yet more furious gallop.

Nearer and nearer we drew to the scrub, and the pace was tremendous. The strain was telling fearfully on both horses, and it was evident that neither of them had much more running left in him. George's was labouring fearfully, despite the savage spurring of his rider; while my own faithful roan was sobbing with distress as he struggled gamely, but in vain, to overtake his fellow. And now the goal was very near, and still George thundered on. Would he beat me? I ground my teeth together and called on my horse for one last effort. Gallantly the poor brute responded, and I felt him spring beneath me as he put all his noble heart into the struggle. Hurrah! I was gaining. But, oh, how slowly. It was a question of time, of endurance, and—ha! look at George! Was I blind with excitement, or was he reeling in his saddle? Nearer and nearer—five minutes more and he will be there. Three are gone—four—he is there! And then for one moment I seemed to see him sway from side to side—the next, I was hurled through the air like a bolt from a bow, as my horse, putting his foot in a treacherous hole, came headlong to the ground.

For some moments I lay there stunned; and then, struggling again into consciousness, I tried to rise. But it was no use; my left leg was broken, and I sank back with a groan. Fifty yards away, I saw George supporting himself on one elbow and looking at me.

'Are you hit, George?' I called out.

'Yes,' he answered; 'somewhere in the shoulder. I lost so much blood, I couldn't keep my seat. What's wrong with you?'

'Leg,' I replied laconically. 'Surrender, George.'

He laughed. 'What! To a man with a game-leg? Not I. Besides, what for? You would nurse my wound well again, and then hang me. No, no; I know a trick worth two of that; and he began to crawl slowly and painfully towards a point somewhere to my right, not, to my surprise, in the direction of the scrub. I watched him for a moment or two as he dragged himself laboriously along. 'What are you at?' I shouted at last, puzzled by his behaviour. He never answered; but with his eyes fixed apparently on some object which I could not see, held straight on his course, his breath coming and going in deep shuddering sighs from the dreadful effort the exertion cost him.

'Whatever can his game be?' I wondered, as, screwing myself round with difficulty, I followed the direction of his intent gaze. I saw it all now! What a fool I had been not to think of it before! Plainly outlined against a tussock of grass by which it had fallen was my revolver, which had been jerked out of my hand as I fell. That was what George was making for.

I wasted no time in words, you may be sure; I wasn't going to lie there to be shot like a dog, and, cursing my own folly, I started to crawl towards the revolver on my own account. I had somewhat the best of it even now, for though George was a little nearer the tussock than I was, yet he was fearfully weak, and more than once he fell over on his side, labouring painfully for breath. But, oh! it was torture for me. Lines of red-hot fire ran up and down my leg, and my very heart ached with the intensity of the pain. The agony was horrible, and over and over again I stopped and sank groaning on my face. But the dreadful issue at stake nerved me, and I held on. I glanced at George, and shuddered, for he was awful to behold. His right arm hung useless by his side; but with his left hand he clutched the grass, or dug his nails into the soil as he dragged himself along, or sank upon his stomach and wriggled forward like a great snake. Great drops of sweat stood out on his forehead and rolled down his cheeks; his teeth were set, and his face, deadly white from loss of blood, wore a look of fierce determination as he rallied after each desperate effort.

All at once, in the midst of that ghastly crawl, I heard the sound of hoofs far away. I never looked round, but I knew what it meant, and a thrill of hope shot through me.

'Give it up, George,' I cried breathlessly. 'The Squire and his men are coming. You've no show, even if you do shoot me.' Not a word said George, only he kept straight on. Nearer and nearer came the thunder of the galloping horses, and nearer and nearer we drew to that deadly revolver, as we laboured along, panting, gasping, groaning, gnashing. Nearer and nearer—I could hear the Squire's shout borne faintly through the clear air. Nearer still, and my heart began to throb exultantly as I realised I was the closer to the goal, when all of a sudden I felt as if all the pain in the world had concentrated itself in my leg. I could not go on, and for one moment at least I had to lie still; and that moment gave

George the advantage, for, as I looked up again, he had reached the revolver. But the terrible strain he had undergone overcame him, and in the very act he sank swooning to the ground. Another instant and it would have been in my grasp, when, with a dying effort, George writhed forward. Our hands met with a shock; but before I could seize his wrist, he snatched the revolver, and with a gigantic heave, rolled over out of reach and lay still. Groaning with pain, I slewed myself round. The Squire and his men were not far away now, and coming on like demons. If I could only reach George before he revived! But it was useless; exhausted nature gave way, and I sat still and despairing.

On came the Squire, shouting like mad. In a moment we should be surrounded; in a moment the danger would be past. Hurrah! I tried to shout, but my parched throat refused its office, and the word died away in a cracked shriek. On thundered the Squire—a couple of hundred yards more and—just then George stirred, heaved a long shuddering sigh, and sat bolt upright, the blood gushing from his mouth and nose, and the revolver tightly clasped in his hand.

I saw it was all up, and steadied myself, determined to meet my fate like a man. Behind me I heard the Squire. In front of me sat George, holding the revolver, and looking deathly as he swayed unsteadily to and fro.

Suddenly he spoke, roused by the shouts that were now almost in our ears. 'I'm done for,' he gasped. 'If it were only you, I'd have a break for freedom; but there are too many. Look here, Sergeant. I was born a gentleman—I've come down a good deal—but I'll die like one. You shan't put the rope round my neck. You shan't!' He raised the revolver to his head, and then, catching sight of my amazed face, he lowered it again and broke into a low gurgling laugh. 'Why, bless you, Sergeant,' he said, 'it was for myself—not for you. So long! So!'—There was a sharp report, and even as the Squire leaped from his reeking horse and rushed forward, 'Gentleman George' fell on his face and lay still—still for ever, this time.

Yes, they took me back to Toomburra, and nursed my leg well again, and I got the reward; but, somehow, whenever I remember George, I am glad he got hold of the revolver first.

SEA-VOICES.

Up from the Deep the mystic voices come—
The mystic, moaning Voices of the Sea;
They sing their 'Miserere' ceaselessly.
I stand and listen to them, stricken dumb.
Aye mingling with the tangled notes of Time,
They chant in mighty harmony below:
'Through grief and pleasure, Life must onward go,
Till God's deep bells the resting-hour shall chime.'
And from the heaving bosom of the Sea
Comes, like a sigh of love, the word to me:
'Though thou shalt see no light in coming years,
Hold thou to this: that good oft seemeth ill,
And that, through storm and darkness moving still,
Man's life is set to music of the spheres.'

J. J. HALDANE BURGESS.

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ELECTRICITY FROM NIAGARA.

By J. MUNRO.

THE great scheme now approaching completion for the utilisation of Niagara Falls by means of electricity is a triumph of human enterprise which outrivals some of the bold creations of Jules Verne.

When in 1678 the French missionaries La Salle and Hennepin discovered the stupendous cataract on the Niagara River between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, the science of electricity was in its early infancy, and little more was known about the mysterious force which is performing miracles in our day than its manifestation on rubbed amber, sealing-wax, glass, and other bodies. Nearly a hundred years had still to pass ere Franklin should demonstrate the identity of the electric fire with lightning, and nearly another hundred before Faraday should reveal a mode of generating it from mechanical power. Assuredly, neither La Salle nor his contemporaries ever dreamed of a time when the water-power of the Falls would be distributed by means of electricity to produce light or heat and serve all manner of industries in the surrounding district. The awe-struck Iroquois Indians had named the cataract 'Oniagalra,' or Thunder of the Waters, and believed it the dwelling-place of the Spirit of Thunder. This poetical name is none the less appropriate now that the modern electrician is preparing to draw his lightnings from its waters and compel the *genius loci* to become his willing bondsman.

The Falls of Niagara are situated about twenty-one miles from Lake Erie, and fourteen miles from Lake Ontario. At this point the Niagara River, nearly a mile broad, flowing between level banks, and parted by several islands, is suddenly shot over a precipice one hundred and sixty feet high, and making a sharp bend to the north, pursues its course through a narrow gorge towards Lake Ontario. The Falls are divided at the brink by Goat Island, whose primeval woods are

still thriving in their spray. The Horseshoe Fall on the Canada side is eight hundred and twelve yards, and the American falls on the south side are three hundred and twenty-five yards wide. For a considerable distance both above and below the Falls the river is turbulent with rapids.

The water-power of the cataract has been employed from olden times. The French fur-traders placed a mill beside the upper rapids, and the early British settlers built another to saw the timber used in their stockades. By-and-by the Stedman and Porter mills were established below the Falls; and subsequently, others which derived their water-supply from the lower rapids by means of raceways or leads. Eventually, an open hydraulic canal three-fourths of a mile long was cut across the elbow of land on the American side, through the town of Niagara Falls, between the rapids above and the verge of the chasm below the Falls, where, since 1874, a cluster of factories have arisen, which discharge their spent water over the cliff in a series of cascades almost rivalling Niagara itself. This canal, which only taps a mere drop from the ocean of power that is running to waste, has been utilised to the full; and the decrease of water-privileges in the New England States, owing to the clearing of the forests and settlement of the country, together with the growth of the electrical industries, have led to a further demand on the resources of Niagara.

With the example of Minneapolis, which draws its power from the Falls of St Anthony—the 'Laughing Water' of *Hiawatha*—before them, a group of far-seeing and enterprising citizens of Niagara Falls have resolved to satisfy this requirement by the foundation of an industrial city in the neighbourhood of the Falls. They perceived that a better site could nowhere be found on the American Continent. Apart from its healthy air and attractive scenery, Niagara is a kind of half-way house between the East and West, the consuming and the producing States. By the Erie Canal at

Tonawanda it commands the great water-way of the Lakes and the St Lawrence. A system of trunk railways from different parts of the States and Canada are focused there, and cross the river by the Cantilever and Suspension bridges below the Falls. The New York Central and Hudson River, the Lehigh Valley, the Buffalo, Rochester, and Pittsburgh, the Michigan Central, and the Grand Trunk of Canada, are some of these lines. Draining as it does the great lakes of the interior, which have a total area of 92,000 square miles, with an aggregate basin of 290,000 square miles, the volume of water in the Niagara River passing over the cataract every second is something like 300,000 cubic feet; and this, with a fall of two hundred and seventy-six feet from the head of the upper rapids to the whirlpool rapids below, is equivalent to about nine million, or, allowing for waste in the turbines, say seven million horse-power. Moreover, the great lakes discharging into each other form a chain of immense reservoirs; and the level of the river being little affected by flood or drought, the supply of pure water is practically constant all the year round. Mr R. C. Reid has shown that a rainfall of three inches in twenty-four hours over the basin of Lake Superior would take ninety days to run off into Lake Huron, which with Lake Michigan would take as long to overflow into Lake Erie; and therefore six months would elapse before the full effect of the flood was expended at the Falls.

The first outcome of the movement was the Niagara River Hydraulic Power and Sewer Company, incorporated in 1886, and succeeded by the Niagara Falls Power Company. The old plan of utilising the water by means of an open canal was unsuited to the circumstances, and the company adopted that of the late Mr Thomas Evershed, Divisional Engineer of the New York State Canals. Like the other, it consists in tapping the river above the Falls, and using the pressure of the water to drive a number of turbines; then restoring the water to the river below the Falls; but instead of a surface canal, the tail-race is an hydraulic tunnel or underground conduit. To this end some fifteen hundred acres of spare land, having a frontage just above the upper rapids, was quietly secured at the low price of three hundred dollars an acre; and we believe its rise in value owing to the progress of the works is such that a yearly rental of two hundred dollars an acre can even now be got for it. This land has been laid out as an industrial city, with a residential quarter for the operatives, wharfs along the river, and sidings or short lines to connect with the trunk railways. In carrying out their purpose the company has budded and branched into other companies—one for the purchase of the land; another for making the railways; and a third, the Cataract Construction Company, which is charged with the carrying out of the engineering works for the utilisation

of the water-power, and is therefore the most important of all. A subsidiary company has also been formed to transmit by electricity a portion of the available power to the city of Buffalo, at the mouth of the Niagara River, on Lake Erie, some twenty miles distant. All these affiliated bodies are, however, under the directorate of the Cataract Construction Company; and amongst those who have taken the most active part in the work we may mention the President, Mr E. D. Adams; Professor Coleman Sellers, the Consulting Engineer; and Professor George Forbes, F.R.S., a son of the late Principal Forbes of Edinburgh, who is Consulting Electrical Engineer.

In securing the necessary way-leaves for the hydraulic tunnel or in the acquisition of land, the company has shown consummate tact. A few proprietors declined to accept its terms, and the company selected a parallel route. Having obtained the way-leaves for it, it informed the refractory owners on the first line of their success, and intimated that the company could now dispense with that. On this the sticklers professed their willingness to accept the original terms, and the bargain was concluded; thus leaving the company in possession of the rights of way for two tunnels, both of which they propose to utilise.

The liberal policy of the Directors is deserving of the highest commendation. They have risen above mere 'chauvinism,' and instead of narrowly confining the work to American engineers, they have availed themselves of the best scientific counsel which the entire world could afford. The great question as to the best means of distributing and applying the power at their command had to be settled; and in 1890, after Mr Adams and Dr Sellers had made a visit of inspection to Europe, an International Commission was appointed to consider the various methods submitted to them, and award prizes to the successful competitors. Lord Kelvin (then Sir William Thomson) was the President; and Professor W. C. Unwin, our well-known expert in hydraulic engineering, the Secretary; while other members were Professor Mascart of the Institute, the leading French electrician; Colonel Turretini of Geneva; and Dr Sellers. A large number of schemes were sent in, and many distinguished engineers gave evidence before the Commission. The relative merits of compressed air and electricity as a means of distributing the power were discussed, and on the whole the balance of opinion was in favour of electricity. Prizes of two hundred and two hundred and fifty pounds were awarded to a number of firms who had submitted plans, but none of these were taken up by the company. The impulse turbines of Messrs Faesch and Piccard of Geneva, who gained a prize of two hundred and fifty pounds, have, however, been adopted since. It is another proof of the determination of the company to procure the best information on the subject regardless of cost,

that Professor Forbes has *carte blanche* to go to any part of the world and make a Report on any system of electrical distribution which he may think fit.

With the selection of electricity another question arose as to the expediency of employing continuous or alternating currents. At that time continuous currents were chiefly in vogue; and it speaks well for the sagacity and prescience of Professor Forbes that he boldly advocated the adoption of alternating currents, more especially for the transmission of power to Buffalo. His proposals encountered strong opposition, even in the highest quarters; but since then, partly owing to the striking success of the Lauffen to Frankfurt experiment in transmitting power by alternating currents over a bare wire on poles a distance of more than a hundred miles, the Directors and Engineers have come round to his view of the matter, and there is little doubt that alternating currents will be employed, at all events for the Buffalo line, and probably for the chief supply of the industrial city. Continuous currents, flowing always in the same direction, like the current of a battery, can, it is true, be stored in accumulators, but they cannot be converted to higher or lower pressure in a transformer. Alternating currents, on the other hand, which see-saw in direction many times a second, cannot be stored in accumulators, but they can be sent at high pressure along a very fine wire, and then connected to higher or lower pressures where they are wanted. Each end, therefore, has its peculiar advantages, and probably both will be employed to some extent.

With regard to the engineering works, the hydraulic tunnel starts from the bank of the river where it is navigable, at a point a mile and a half above the Falls, and after keeping by the shore, it cuts across the bend beneath the city of Niagara Falls, and terminates below the Suspension Bridge under the Falls at the level of the water. It is 6700 yards long, and of a horseshoe section, nineteen feet wide by twenty-one feet high. It has been cut one hundred and sixty feet below the surface through the limestone and shale, but is arched with brick, having rubble above, and at the outfall lined on the invert or under side with iron. The gradient is thirty-six feet in the mile, and the total fall is 205 feet, of which 140 feet are available for use. The capacity of the tunnel is 100,000 horse-power. In the lands of the company it is 400 feet from the margin of the river, to which it is connected by a canal, which is over 1500 feet long, 500 feet wide at the mouth, and twelve feet deep.

Out of this canal, head-races fitted with sluices conduct the water to a number of wheel-pits 160 feet deep, which have been dug near the edge of the canal, and communicate below with the tunnel. At the bottom of each wheel-pit a 5000 horse-power Girard double turbine is mounted on a vertical shaft, which drives a propeller shaft rising to the surface of the ground; a dynamo of 5000 horse-power is to be fixed on the top of this shaft, and so driven by it. The upward pressure of the water is ingeniously contrived to relieve the foundation of the weight of the turbine shaft and dynamo. Twenty of these turbines, which are

made by the I. P. Morris Company of Philadelphia from the designs of Messrs Faesch and Picard, will be required to utilise the full capacity of the tunnel.

The company possesses a strip of land extending two miles along the shore; and in excavating the tunnel, a coffer-dam was made with the extracted rock, to keep the river from flooding the works. This dam now forms part of a system by which a tract of land has been reclaimed from the river. Part of it has already been acquired by the Niagara Paper Pulp Company, which is building gigantic factories, and will employ the tail-race or tunnel of the Cataract Construction Company. Wharfs for the use of ships and canal boats will also be constructed on this frontage. By land and water the raw materials of the West will be conveyed to the industrial town which is now coming into existence; grain from the prairies of Illinois and Dakota; timber from the forests of Michigan and Wisconsin; coal and copper from the mines of Lake Superior; and what not. It is expected that one industry having a seat there will attract others. Thus, the pulp-mills will bring the makers of paper wheels and barrels; the smelting of iron will draw foundries and engine-works; the electrical refining of copper will lead to the establishment of wire-works, cable factories, dynamo shops; and so on. Aluminium, too, promises to create an important industry in the future. In the meantime, the Cataract Construction Company is about to start an electrical factory of its own, which will give employment to a large number of men. It has also undertaken the water-supply of the adjacent city of Niagara Falls. The Cataract Electric Company of Buffalo has obtained the exclusive right to use the electricity transmitted to that city, and it is all but settled that the line will be run in a subway for which way-leaves have been obtained. The underground line will be more expensive to make than an overhead line, but it will not require to be renewed every eight to fifteen years; and it will not be liable to interruption from the heavy gales that sweep across the lakes, or the weight of frozen sleet; moreover, it will be more easily inspected and quite safe for the public. We should also add that in addition to the contemplated duplicate tunnel of 100,000 horse-power, the Cataract Construction Company owns a concession for utilising 250,000 horse-power from the Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side in the same manner. It has thus a virtual monopoly of the available water-power of Niagara; and Professor Forbes has not the least doubt that the enterprise will be a great financial success.

Thanks to the foresight of the New York State and Canada, the scenery of the Falls has been preserved by the institution of public parks; and the works in question will do nothing to spoil it, especially as they will be free from smoke. Mr Bogarts, State Engineer of New York, estimates that the water drawn from the river will only lower the mean depth of the Falls about two inches, and will therefore make no appreciable difference in the view. The utilisation of the tunnel will by this time be in practical operation, and the electrical distribution is to be ready during the summer. Altogether, the enterprise is something new in the history of the world.

It is not only the grandest application of electrical power, but one of the most remarkable feats in an age when romance has become scientific, and science has become romantic.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XIV.—THE FATTED CALF.

THE morning after Isabel found her father she woke early with the horror of the opium den upon her, and she began to reflect what was to be done with him. All day, at school, when not engrossed with her teaching, she considered what arrangements she could make for his comfort and reclamation; yes, reclamation: she did not like to think the word in regard to her father, but she did not know any other (nor do I) that would cover the necessities of his case. She pondered one plan after another, but she finally returned to that of which she had first thought: she must bring her father to live with her. She saw that if she did not, she could not properly tend and control him. She was not unaware what that decision might entail upon her—what anxiety, what risk, and what loss even; but yet she returned to it, and that not merely from an impulsive sentiment. She perceived clearly enough that such a habit as her father's, maintained more or less for twenty years and longer, must not only have 'shattered' his nerves—as Mr Doughty declared—but also have sapped his will and ruined his self-respect, and that, therefore, to restore him to himself would be both an onerous and a tedious task, demanding tact, resource, and patience: in a word, demanding Love. She perceived also certain side-issues likely to arise from her contemplated action: her father might (probably would) sometimes break away from her control, cause disquiet in their lodging, and bring upon her more expense than she could well bear; and her uncle—both her uncles—might become alienated from her, at least for a time. And why should she take this burden upon her? Because it was her duty?—because he was her father? Not altogether. Isabel was a young lady of the kind that the forces of education are tending to make increasingly common: she did not accept an opinion or perform an action merely because tradition or convention said it was right; she sought to prove all things, and at the same time to hold fast to that which is good. She had concluded long ere this that, as loosely and foolishly applied, 'Duty means something disagreeable which other people think you ought to do;' and if she had thought the particular line of conduct that lay before her disagreeable, and if she were driven to argue about it, she might have shown sufficiently that it was not her bounden duty to rescue her father from the fate to which he had committed himself, since she owed him nothing but her being. But she had not troubled to argue so—indeed, like a true woman, she had attained her conclusion not at all by course of argument—she merely did not herself think of the word 'Duty' in connection with her father, and would have resented its use by another. The fact that her father was her father inclined her to him, and the discovery that he had something

about him which pleased and charmed her made her inclination into positive attraction. In spite of his appearance, in spite of all, she liked him, and she thought well of him; but it is probable she would not have turned her energies with such generosity and alacrity to his resuscitation and rehabilitation, had she not believed him to be a man of talent and attainment.

When school was over she hurried away to her lodging to begin the fulfilment of her purpose. She inquired of her landlady if there was an unoccupied bedroom in the house. Yes; there was a bedroom—'the second-floor back'—recently vacated by a young gentleman that kept late hours.

'Almost as late hours as yourself, miss,' said the landlady pointedly.

'It would probably suit me,' said Isabel, ignoring her allusion. She added on an impulse of mischief: 'It is for a gentleman I should want it, Mrs Wiffin.'

'Lawk-a-daisy me, miss!' exclaimed Mrs Wiffin, subsiding into a chair, with her hands limp in her lap. 'The flurries and the worrits you put me into!—you do, indeed! A gentleman! P'raps you're thinking of getting married. But the ways of gentlefolk must be changed: when I was a girl you'd ha' no more thought of having your intended to live in the same house with you than— There! Well! You're a good, clever, innocent young lady, I believe; but take my word for it, men are all bad when they get the chance! And you're a handsome, fine figure of a girl, my dear, and no mother to tell you things!—as I often think to myself when I'm waiting up for you at night!'

'You are a dear, good soul, Mrs Wiffin,' laughed Isabel, sitting down and taking her landlady's hand, 'and I shall try not to flurry and worry you any more.'

'There's a dear!' said Mrs Wiffin, patting her hand. 'You see I'm so perceptible to things that touch my feelings.'

Then Isabel revealed to Mrs Wiffin as a secret that must be kept from every one that it was for her father she desired the extra room: he was in poor health and must be kept quiet, and therefore she wished to take charge of him; at all which Mrs Wiffin expressed her surprise and admiration.

Isabel had just sat down to have—as women foolishly will—a make-shift meal, when there was a loud rat-tat-tat at the street door, and her uncle—Uncle Harry—was shown into her little sitting-room.

'Ah, there you are,' said Uncle Harry. 'I'm restless. I've had a walk across the park, and I thought I'd just have a cup of tea and a chat with you, my dear.'

'It is good of you, uncle, to drop in like this,' said Isabel.

'In this soft London air,' said Uncle Harry, stirring the cup of tea which his niece handed him, 'I am beginning to find I have a liver. I never knew before I had one; but, I suppose, that rascal Daniel's curries—of which I have eaten too many—have developed it.'

'And how,' laughed Isabel, 'do you propose to get rid of your liver, uncle?'

'By strict regimen,' the doctor says, "and by exercise:" by eating and drinking, that is to say, what I don't like, and by walking more than is

comfortable or even possible in London streets and back-gardens.

'Don't you think, uncle,' said Isabel with a smile, 'a homeopathic treatment would be better? Eat and drink what you like—curry or whatever it may be—but in small doses.'

'Gad!' said he, 'that's a good suggestion: homeopathic!' And he smiled most agreeably, his eyes being involved in good-natured wrinkles. 'You're a very clever girl, you know.'

Since he had sat down, it was inevitable that she should have his brother—her father—in her thought. And still as she looked at him and observed the varying expression of his face, she noted how like he was to his brother, and yet how unlike: they were, she said to herself, as a complete personality cleft in two—Uncle Harry being as the male half, hard and alert; and her father being as the female, soft, sensuous, and plastic.

'Uncle Harry,' said she, 'have you ever known any one who had for years been addicted to a subtle and insidious kind of poison?'

'Drink, do you mean?' asked Uncle Harry, frowning.

'Something like that,' said she.

'I've known tens—hundreds,' said he.

'What would you do with a person of that sort?'

'I'd let him drink himself dead,' said Uncle Harry: 'it's all you can do.'

'Nonsense, uncle,' said Isabel. 'There's surely no habit but can be changed so long as you have a body and a mind. Suppose you wanted to cure a person of that kind, how would you treat the person?'

'Cut off the liquor at once,' said Uncle Harry.

'Don't you think,' said Isabel, 'that the homeopathic way would be better? Your way seems to me so sudden and dangerous. The person who gets into the habit of drinking to excess, for instance, drinks because of his craving for a stimulant: if you wish to cure him, should not your procedure be first to vary the stimulant?'

'My experience has been,' said Uncle Harry, 'that a man takes drink because he likes it.'

'Likes the effect,' said Isabel, 'which is stimulative, less or more.' Then continuing her exposition of her view, she went on: 'First vary the stimulant. For instance, in place of dreadful, strong spirits, give him light wine, and good, stimulating food. A person that is given to drinking to excess seldom eats much—does he?'

'Very seldom; never, I may say. As I heard a soldier once put it, "He eats his beer."'

'Very well; get your person to eat well: that will be a new form of stimulation for him. Then gradually divert his attention from these gross and unwholesome forms of stimulation to others of a refined and wholesome nature; to music—if your person is that way inclined—and so on.'

Perceiving the pertinacity with which his niece followed out this exposition, Uncle Harry observed her closely—not exactly with wonder and with the question in his mind: 'Yes, of course, but why such steadfast earnestness in this?'

Isabel, seeing his intent look, and broken what might be in his thought, dropped the inquiry, saying: 'After all, speculation, earthly use, kind is foolish—is it not?'

'Speculation,' said he sententiously, 'is the pet'

wise nor foolish in itself, but only in regard to the actions it may lead to.'

Having thus closed that discussion, he said in a manner meant to be very cordial that he had come on purpose to have a chat about something else; and Isabel, in a tone likewise meant to be very cordial and affectionate, begged to know what it was, while she feared, with a glance at the clock, that she would be much later than she had intended to be in setting out to her father. He was very comfortable, he said, with George and Joanna: he had pitched his tent in their back-garden; but he had come to think he would like a 'pitch' of his own: he did not like his daily view of other people's back-windows, and he did not like to order about other people's servants. Isabel thought—with her eye on the clock—that it would be very lonely for him to live by himself. Naturally, he said with a laugh; but he feared he bored his niece; he would come to the point: he had his eye on a companion: oh, dear, no! he did not mean marriage—nothing so foolish as that—but yet he meant a lady. And still Isabel furtively eyed the clock.

'It's you I mean,' he said suddenly. 'Would it trouble you—do you think?—to join hands with me?—to live with me? I'm sometimes crotchety, cranky, and crusty, I believe; but you're a sensible girl, and you could manage me, I've no doubt. I think we should suit each other. What do you say, my girl?'

'You are very kind, uncle,' said she quietly; very much astonished and perplexed, and becoming pale under her uncle's shrewd, expectant gaze: she now perceived her difficult position. 'The kindness of your proposal is overwhelming. But I—I think I had better remain as I am.'

'Oh,' said he, with an involuntary snap like the closing of a box. He frowned a little in evident vexation. 'You like your independence, I suppose, and your freedom?'

'It's not that, uncle. No, no; it's not that. I am, believe me, not so enamoured of my independence and freedom. Sometimes they are a trouble and a burden, for, you see, I am a woman—to my great regret.'

'Oh, what is it, then?' asked he, softening his heart again and leaning with a smile over the table. 'Come now; speak to me as you would to a father. Tell me frankly down, were you—'

'Frankly, then, uncle,' with a skill and in a I would have accepted not on the Thames would 'A week ago I was to do in the then state of the see, I see. The Dutch were forced, however, first, and three of their own vessels, which had ness. I see and could not be got off.

mean, yet says that the distraction and consternation of the court and city were as great as if Dutch had been not only masters of the river but had really landed an army of a hundred thousand men. The distraction and consternation of the king and court at least may be doubted, for the same night on which the Dutch burned the ships near Chatham, the king did sup with my lady Castlemain at the Duchess of Monmouth's, and there were all mad at hunting of a poor moth.'

Those of the populace who were able to do so fled into the country, taking their effects with them. They were doubtless used to periodical flights by this time, for first they had the Plague, then the Fire, and then came the Dutch to cap

Her uncle wrinkled and puckered his brows in disappointment and suspicion and drummed on the table. 'I suppose,' said he, 'you would say it is no business of mine to ask the nature of the responsibility?'

'No, no, uncle. I would not say anything of the kind. Indeed, I would not. I cannot really tell you, but not because I think it impertinent in you to ask. I may tell you some day—by-and-by—but I cannot tell you now. Pray, believe me, uncle.'

'I do believe you, my dear,' said he, patting the hand she extended to him. 'And I believe you are too sensible and clever not to have a sufficient reason for what you are doing and for keeping it to yourself. Do not trouble yourself. Be good. But I suppose this responsibility won't remain on you for ever? When it's gone, will you promise me to consider my offer?'

'I cannot say how long the responsibility may remain; but it may modify itself; in any case, I promise.'

Then Uncle Harry rose to go. 'I daresay,' said he, 'you feel scarcely equal to a walk this afternoon. You look a little upset, and had better rest, perhaps. If,' he continued, holding her hand and looking at her kindly, 'you should want to confide in me by-and-by about any difficulty, you will not find me backward to help you.'

'You are very good, uncle,' said she; 'and I may come to you for advice by-and-by.'

(To be continued.)

THE DUTCH RAID ON THE MEDWAY.

'I WILL be revenged!' So, with a great oath, exclaimed John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of the United Provinces. What he took oath to avenge was the burning of Vlie and its shipping by Admiral Holmes in 1666. The time had now come for retribution. Charles II. had been voted five millions of money to equip a fleet and put the country in a proper state of defence, in view of the Dutch war, then in progress. But the Merry Monarch, with great ingenuity, had found—in his estimation at least—a better use for it; he spent the greater part on his court and his favourites—mostly females. Tradition or convention that the country was utterly sought to prove all things honour at the mercy to hold fast to that which his Diary, bitterly concluded long ere this that, at this period, foolishly applied, 'Duty means abandoned to agreeable which other people think you completely do;' and if she had thought the particularly in conduct that lay before her disagreeable, and she were driven to argue about it, she might not have shown sufficiently that it was not her bounden duty to rescue her father from the fate to which he had committed himself, since she owed him nothing but her being. But she had not troubled to argue so—indeed, like a true woman, she had attained her conclusion not at all by course of argument—she merely did not herself think of the word 'Duty' in connection with her father, and would have resented its use by another. The fact that her father was her father inclined her to him, and the discovery that he had something

Such was the state of affairs when the Dutch made their descent on the English coast. They could not have chosen a better time. On the 17th June 1667, Cornelius de Witt, brother of the Grand Pensionary, and Admiral de Ruyter appeared off the Nore with a Dutch fleet of fifty-one men-of-war, three frigates, and fourteen fire-ships. On the morning of the 19th, after a council of war had been held, an expedition, consisting of seventeen of the most formidable of the men-of-war, under Admirals van Ghent, De Liefde, and Vlieg, left the main fleet, and sailed up the Thames, cautiously feeling their way among the numerous shoals and sands that guard the mouth of the river; and here it may be mentioned that the Dutch, while they were in the Thames, showed a knowledge of its navigation which the English themselves did not possess. They got up with the first tide as far as the Middle, and with the second to about two miles of the Hope. Here they could see the ships at Gravesend; but the wind falling and evening coming on, they cast anchor. Next morning the English ships had disappeared higher up the river, and Van Ghent thought it prudent to return to the mouth of the Medway, where he was joined by other ten men-of-war under De Ruyter himself.

On the afternoon of the 20th, being opposite Sheerness, three of the more powerful vessels, the 'Haarlem' of forty-six, the 'Peace' of forty, and the 'Utrecht' of thirty-six guns, were ordered to attack and demolish the fort that had been newly raised there; while several light vessels were sent up the river to take soundings. Burnet says that 'there had been enough discourse all that year of erecting a fort at Sheerness for the defence of the river. The king had made two journeys thither in winter, and had given such orders to Commissioners of Ordnance respecting fortifications, that everybody thought the work was done.' As a matter of fact, the fort was in so weak and unfinished a state that a two hours' bombardment sufficed to batter it about the ears of its garrison, who took to flight on the appearance of a Dutch storming party of eight hundred, who, having carried off what guns and stores they could, along with the flag, blew up what remained of the fort, and retired in triumph to their vessels.

Meanwhile, the advent of the Dutch created wild confusion and dismay at Whitehall. No one seemed to know what to do. The Lord Lieutenant of Kent being absent, his deputies would not venture to take command of the troops there. The king sent down Lieutenant-general Middleton, who hastily assembled the trainbands at Rochester. While this was being done, however, the Dutch were working their wicked will unmolested.

The news of the taking of Sheerness spread error as well as aroused indignation throughout the metropolis. The Court was roused to action, never much, perhaps, by the gravity of the that in, as by popular clamour and the fear eaten torob. Pepys says the king meditated a

'And Windsor, for change of air, as he put it, get rid of yf Albemarle (General Monk) hastened "By striiver with the Guards and all the exercise:" could collect at the moment. On what I don't am, he found General Middleton

strongly posted there, but nothing else done for the defence of the river, except that, opposite the village of Gillingham, a chain had been stretched across the water, supported on masts sunk in the mud. He immediately raised batteries at Chatham and reinforced Upnor Castle. In order to make the chain a better defence, he sunk seven ships in front of it. There should have been another, but the 'Santa Maria,' the eighth, had run aground, and was not available. The gap thus left was the undoing of the whole business. The man-of-war 'Unity' was posted before, and the 'Carolus Quintus,' the 'Matthias,' and the 'Monmouth' behind the chain, to guard it. Several ships were also sunk at Woolwich and Blackwall, to block the river in that direction. As to these latter Pepys says: 'But strange our confusion! that among them that are sunk are the "Franklin," one of the king's ships with stores to a very considerable value, that hath been long loaded for supply of the ships; and nobody will own that they directed it, but lay it on Sir W. Rider. They speak also of another ship loaded to the value of eighty thousand pounds sunk with the goods in her, or at least was mightily contended for by him and a foreign ship that had the faith of the nation for her security; and it is too plain a truth that both here and at Chatham the ships that we have sunk have many, and the first of them been ships completely fitted for fireships at great charge.' Strange confusion indeed! but with the noise of the Dutch guns thundering in their ears, it is not to be wondered at that there was not much time for calm consideration, or that they sunk the first ships they could lay their hands on.

After levelling Sheerness fort, the Dutch weighed anchor on the 22d as soon as the tide served, and proceeded up the Medway. On reaching the vessels posted at the chain, two of the men-of-war, the 'Protection' and the 'Peace,' immediately engaged the 'Unity,' and, after a short fight, boarded and carried her. Meanwhile two fireships sailed through the gap in the sunken vessels and drove right at the chain and snapped it. One of them immediately fell foul of the 'Matthias,' set her on fire and blew her up; and shortly afterwards the 'Carolus Quintus' fell into the hands of the enemy; the 'Monmouth' seeing the turn of affairs, prudently made off. Two batteries which had been hastily erected on the shore had all this time been blazing away, but now, being exposed to a cross-fire, surrendered. When the Dutch landed at Gillingham to seize the forts, they behaved with praise-worthy moderation. They did not set a single house on fire—unlike the English at Vlie—or kill a single person, or indulge in plundering, except, as Pepys naively remarks, they only 'did take some things of easy carriage and left the rest,' in striking contrast to the English troops who occupied the village after them, who plundered the inhabitants as if they were in an enemy's country.

The passage now being forced, the whole Dutch squadron came up and sailed through the broken barrier. The dismantled 'Royal Charles' and the 'Mary' had been negligently left lying in the river, where they could be of no earthly use, and these fell into the hands of the Dutch without a blow. The 'Royal Charles'—the 'pet'

ship of the English fleet—could easily have been saved by the same tide which brought up the Dutch if there had been boats to tow her; but it was said that all the boats had been requisitioned by the English captains to convey their effects on shore from the threatened vessels. This was made the subject of an inquiry afterwards, at which Mr Pett said that he certainly used some boats to carry the models into safety, as he considered that the models would have been of much more use to the Dutch than the vessels themselves; to which the Commissioners naturally enough replied that they would rather the Dutch had had the models than the vessels, and relegated Mr Pett to the cool shades of the Tower.

The Dutch squadron sailed next morning up the river unmolested as far as Upnor Castle. This they would not have been able to do if a great blunder had not been committed in not bringing down field-guns with the troops. They had been left behind for want of 'orders.' If field-guns had been brought down the river, the Dutch would not have been able to do the damage they did; as it was, the English could only march parallel with the advancing ships, which were completely out of the range of musketry. On reaching the castle they were received by a heavy fire, which, however, soon fell off for want of powder. The Dutch now sent their boats up and burned the 'London,' the 'Princess,' the 'Oak,' and the 'Royal James,' along with several merchantmen, which were lying helpless above the castle. It is questionable if the Dutch advanced as far as Chatham itself, as is commonly stated, for Burnet says 'without doubt, if they had prosecuted their present advantage, they might have fired the royal navy at Chatham, and taken or destroyed all the ships that lay higher in the river; but they thought they had done enough, and so returned with the ebb.'

It is probable that De Ruyter was not deterred by any humane considerations of having 'done enough' from burning all he could lay his hands on; but he did not think it safe to go up any higher, as he was now in a narrow and intricate channel, where his escape might easily be cut off. He retreated, therefore, carrying with him the 'Royal Charles' and the 'Unity,' which, considering they had to be towed down, were navigated through the shoals with a skill and in a way that the best pilot on the Thames would hardly have dared to do in the then state of the wind and tide. The Dutch were forced, however, to set fire to three of their own vessels, which had gone ashore and could not be got off.

Burnet says that the distraction and consternation of the court and city were as great as if the Dutch had been not only masters of the river but had really landed an army of a hundred thousand men. The distraction and consternation of the king and court at least may be doubted, for the same night on which the Dutch burned the ships near Chatham, 'the king did sup with my lady Castlemain at the Duchess of Monmouth's, and there were all mad at hunting of a poor moth.'

Those of the populace who were able to do so fled into the country, taking their effects with them. They were doubtless used to periodical flights by this time, for first they had the Plague, then the Fire, and then came the Dutch to cap

the climax. As Pepys piously remarks, it looked as if there were a curse upon the country for the sins of its rulers. He tells how he first sent his wife and valuables into the country for safety, not being able himself to leave his post, and then made his will, in momentary expectation of death by violence at the hands of the enraged mob, as, being a government official, he would naturally be among the first upon whom it would wreak its vengeance. The mob might have had some excuse under the circumstances; it did not, however, resort to violence, confining itself to hurling insulting epithets at the members of the court and government whenever they appeared on the streets. As a finish to their exploit, the Dutch afterwards landed a force at Harwich and levied contributions on the neighbouring country.

Thus ended an incident unique, it may be said, in the history of England, in which the inhabitants of London heard for the first and last time the roar of an enemy's guns. It had such a salutary effect on the rulers of this country that peace was hastily concluded six weeks afterwards.

BY ACCIDENT.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

THESE words of the doctor's made a great impression upon Dick Marsden. Of what nature could that be which Leah was concealing from him? he asked himself. Whatever it was, it must have happened before they came to Bennington, and after the change in their fortunes had been brought about, for, although ever loving publicity and the society of those with whom she was professionally brought in contact, and of a decidedly gregarious and even convivial temperament, Leah had never before betrayed the nervousness and restlessness and inability to fix her attention upon one occupation for any length of time, of which the doctor made such a point, and upon the seriousness of which he laid such stress.

Dick puzzled over this mystery for a long time without arriving any nearer to a plausible solution of it. Suddenly it occurred to him that Leah's father, the disreputable gipsy loafer, might in some way be connected with her mental trouble. He did not think that the mere fact of separation from him was weighing heavily upon the girl, although she had more than once asked to be allowed to see him, for their relationship had never been of a particularly affectionate character. Indeed, during their life in the Leadenhall Street alley, his dissipation and idleness and his constant demands upon her earnings were endless sources of warfare between them; but the man was kept out of mischief by her influence and her presence; and it was just possible, Dick thought, that a spark of filial feeling might make Leah anxious about what her father was doing when her influence was removed.

So one morning at breakfast he asked her straightly: 'Leah, is your father in trouble?'

The girl started as if struck; and instantly Dick divined that he was in the neighbourhood of a solution of the mystery.

'Not that I know of,' she stammered in reply.

'But I do know that he has long been anxious to get out of the country—to America, or Australia, or somewhere; but he hasn't the money.'

Dick pondered for a minute. Then he said: 'If he were provided with the money, and you knew he was far away and trying to become a respectable member of society, would you become more of your old self again?'

'I—I don't know, but I would try,' she answered.

'Then it is on his account that you have been so disturbed and miserable since you have been in this house?' said Dick.

'Yes—yes!' replied the girl earnestly.

'What a pity you did not tell me before,' said Dick kindly. 'You are sure there is nothing else?'

'No—nothing else.'

'Very well,' said Dick, 'I tell you honestly, your father is not a man to be trusted; but I will arrange to meet him somewhere in this neighbourhood, where I can talk to him, and give him clearly to understand that I expect never to be troubled with him again. I will pay his passage to wherever he chooses to go, and I will give him enough for pocket-money whilst he looks about him. He is a clever fellow, and if he really means to do well, I don't know why he shouldn't.'

The girl's eyes filled with tears, and then, with one of those sudden, uncontrollable outbursts of emotion which Dick had noticed to be almost frequent of late, she rose and rushed from the room.

The arrangement Dick made with Hearn was that he should come down from London the next Sunday morning, and, following directions given, should meet him and Leah at a certain place, where they would be tolerably sure to be free from interruption, and where a distinct understanding should be come to that he was to take himself off from England without delay. Dick Marsden was so thoroughly a Londoner that he was not aware that the country on Sunday is very much more lively and animated than it is on a week-day, especially as during his residence at the Grange he never stirred beyond his own domain on Sunday except to go to church. Consequently, he was not a little chagrined to find, upon the bright, balmy August morning fixed for his interview with Leah's father, that the roads and lanes were quite festive with groups of Sunday-attired rustics come out to see and to be seen, to sweetheart, and to lounge away the long hours before the great event of the day—dinner.

Upon this particular morning Bob Martin, the Causey End signalman, and his 'missis' were out for an airing. As the day was fine and warm, Bob was clad in his stiffest and shiniest; whilst Mrs Bob was, after the manner of her class, fearfully and wonderfully arrayed. Both were supremely content with themselves and with everything around them, and rolled along the hedge-girt lane which led to the very spot arranged upon by Dick for his interview with Hearn, laughing and chatting as only those can laugh and chat upon whom the cares of life sit lightly.

Dick and Leah were waiting at the appointed spot as Bob and Mrs Bob came up.

Bob Martin stopped short. 'Why, bless my heart!' he said, 'who be they?'

'The young gent at the Grange and his lady sure-ly,' replied Mrs Bob. 'Come! Don't stand a starin' at the quality as if they was queer animiles.'

'But—bless me, I've seen him afore,' said Bob, suffering himself unwillingly to be led away.

'Well! That ain't no miracle,' said Mrs Martin.

'No; it ain't. But I didn't meet him in an or'nary way,' replied her spouse, stopping again and looking back at Dick.

'Where hev you seen him that warn't or'nary?' asked Mrs Bob.

'Let me think. Don't go a-interruptin',' replied Bob, walking slowly on with his forefinger pressed to his brow. Then, with a sudden bringing down of his finger on to the palm of his other hand, he said: 'I know. That's the young gent as reckynised one of the bodies at the Singleby Station on the night of the haccident to the down mail last winter; and I've often wondered since if the old gentleman as he reckynised was the one as was hangin' out of the coach window when the mail pulled up hopposite the box; 'cos I heard Master Scott, the Singleby station-clerk, tell him as how the coach the old gentleman was in hadn't left the metals, and that he was the only one killed in her.'

'Well, come along!' said Mrs Bob impatiently. 'There's a parcel o' rubbishge you've been talkin' about the folk. I haven't got no patience with you.'

'And the young lady's his wife?' said Bob.

'Ay, sure-ly,' replied Mrs Bob. 'But they say she ain't much of a lady; leastaways, there's queer folk been to see her at the Grange, and I've heerd tell she was a public singer at one o' them Lunnon music 'alls.'

'Pre'aps the Royal Arcade as is on that bit o' brass the chap give me for a shillin' that same night,' said Bob. 'Why, send I may I if I never!' he added emphatically. Here he stopped dead short again, and, open-mouthed, gaped at a tall man of shabby-genteel appearance, clad, August though it was, in an ulster, who was coming rapidly towards them: at Mr Hearn, in fact, and remained staring at him until he had passed and turned the corner.

'Now, what's the matter?' asked Mrs Martin. 'Martin, you're off your chump, or you've got sunstroke or somethink to go a starin' at folk as though you'd never met people out a walkin' afore.'

'Well,' said Bob abstractedly, 'I'll eat my hat if I ain't seen *that* chap somewheres.'

'Mercy alive on us!' said his spouse. 'If you're agoin' to stop and stare at every one you think as you've seen afore, we'd a better set down, as folks do at the show. I've no patience with you. Come along!'

The old man came along; but during the remainder of that Sunday morning's walk by no wile could Mrs Martin get him to talk except about these two people he had 'seen afore,' the result being that her mood for Sunday-dinner enjoyment was spoiled.

Now a strange thing occurred. We left Dick Marsden and Leah waiting for Hearn at the

arranged spot, known as Crow Corner, and we saw Hearn pass Mr and Mrs Martin on his way to keep his appointment. But he never kept it, for he did not go so far as Crow Corner. For reasons best known to himself, he turned sharply down a deep, narrow lane which left the main lane at about a hundred yards' distance from Crow Corner, and did not reappear.

Meanwhile, Dick and Leah waited and waited until the young man really grew ashamed of being seen so long at the same spot, and Leah was ready to drop with fatigue.

'He must have missed the train,' said Dick; 'for it is impossible that with the detailed directions I gave him he could have missed the road.'

Leah said nothing, but her face expressed actual consternation. Leah complained of headache on her return from the walk, and kept her room during the remainder of the day. Dick sent her dinner in to her, but it came back untasted; and when he went in to see her, he found her, as he expected, under the influence of opium, lying fully dressed on the bed, almost like one dead.

She did not appear at breakfast the next morning, nor would she have come down to luncheon had not Dick insisted upon it. Afterwards, he spoke earnestly and kindly to her about her new slavery, and warned her that she was undoing all the good she might derive from rest and quiet, and that she was preparing for herself a terrible end.

She said nothing, but sat looking away into vacancy. She drove out with her husband in the afternoon, but hardly spoke.

Dick was now convinced that although he might have got into the neighbourhood of the solution of the mystery, he was still some way from it, for such extraordinary symptoms would hardly agitate the most loving of daughters merely because of uncertainty as to the actions of a father. Immediately after dinner she rose to retire to her room. As she was crossing the hall, a servant met her, saying: 'Please, 'm, Mr Martin would like to see the master.'

'Mr Martin! Who's Mr Martin?'

'The signalman at Causey End, 'm.'

'What does he want?'

'I don't know, 'm. He's in the outer hall.'

Leah stepped to where the old man was standing.

'Good-evening, 'm,' said he. 'I wanted a few words with Mr Marsden, 'm, if I could.'

'May I ask your business?' said Leah. 'My husband is engaged just now.'

'Well, 'm, I jes' come to ask him a question, 'm, that's all,' said Bob, 'about that there haccident last winter to the down mail, which he lost his relation in, 'm.'

'Indeed!' said Leah. 'Well, I'm exceedingly glad I have seen you, and have been in time to prevent you from alluding to that dreadful affair before him. He cannot bear it; and is always much upset when the name even of Singleby is mentioned. But perhaps if you tell me'—

'I'm werry sorry for havin' intruded, 'm, and I didn't mean to take a liberty,' said old Bob. 'But strange ideas do get into an old man's head sometimes, and'—

At that moment the dining-room door opened

and Dick appeared. 'Hullo, my man!' he said, 'what is it?'

'Nothink, sir, nothink; I've made a mistake, sir, that's all,' replied Martin, fidgeting uneasily.

'Made a mistake! What do you mean? You seem a respectable man, and I seem to know your face,' said Dick. 'Didn't I see you yesterday?'

'Yes,' put in Leah. 'He's a signalman at Causey End, and he saw us yesterday, and mistook us for other people. That's all.—Good-night, Mr Martin.'

But Dick was examining him suspiciously, and indeed the poor old fellow looked very guilty. 'One minute, my man,' said Dick. 'Of course I daresay you're all right, and that it really is a mistake, but'—

'Forty year come Janiwarry in the company's service, sir,' interposed Bob.

'But for whom did you mistake us?' asked Dick.

'Why, sir—the fact is—I—that is, I mean, you,' stammered Bob, stopped short, and looked despairingly at Leah. Then in self-defence he blurted out: 'Well, sir, your lady here says as how you can't abear to heer speak of that there Singleby haccident; but as you take me for what I ain't, I must speak, whether you like it or not. I 'appened to be standin' by when you, and there was a young lady with you, reckynised the body of the old gentleman alyin' at the Singleby Station; and Master Scott, the station clerk, he said to you, said he'—

'One moment,' interposed Dick. '—Leah, my dear, perhaps you had better go; I don't think you are in a fit state to listen to this topic.'

Leah walked, or rather staggered, up-stairs, and Dick invited the signalman into his study.

Here, Martin repeated in detail all that had happened on the night of the accident to the mail-train, and alluded to the coincidence of having met yesterday two of the same people he had seen on that night.

When the old man had finished, Dick said: 'Mr Martin, I am exceedingly sorry for having misunderstood the object of your visit here to-night; and I am exceedingly glad to have been just in time to prevent your leaving the house. This is an extraordinary story you tell, and although I am not at liberty to say what I think about it, should I require your evidence, may I send for you?'

'Certainly, sir. Whenever I'm off dooty, I'm at your service,' replied Bob.

'In the meanwhile, kindly keep your own counsel about it,' said Dick; 'and good-night!'

And Bob Martin went out, lighter in heart and somewhat heavier in pocket than he had been a few minutes before. 'So,' thought Dick, 'Hearn was about yesterday. Why did he not keep his appointment with me, I wonder? And—I wonder what he was doing about the railway on the night of the accident!'

Dick went to London next morning by the early train, which left long before the first blind at the Grange was pulled up. He returned late in the afternoon and asked for Leah. She had gone out before lunch, the servant said, and had not been seen since.

Dick waited dinner, but Leah did not appear. He went up to her room upon the chance of

her having come home unknown to any one for the purpose of indulging her craving. She did not return that night, nor the next day, nor the day after that, nor during the week.

In the meanwhile, a quiet gentleman from London had taken up his residence at the Grange, and in his company Dick made inquiries all along the line of railway between the point where the mail-train had been stopped by signal opposite to Bob Martin's box, and the point where Bob had consigned to the care of the mail-cart driver the man with the sprained ankle who had lost his way. At Brickenden they learned that a man, answering in every way to the description given by Martin of the individual he had succoured, had gone up to London by the last train on the night of the accident at Singleby. Then, in a terrible burst of lurid light, the significance of the doctor's words concerning the concealment by Leah of something from her husband came full upon Dick Marsden's mind, and for the first time he understood her restlessness, her constant craving for change and excitement, and finally, when deprived of these, her resource to opium.

Another week passed, which Dick devoted to discovering if possible the whereabouts of Leah and her father. At the music hall they knew nothing about her, nor had she been back to the old lodging in the alley of Leadenhall Street. He was on the point of putting the matter in the hands of regular detectives, when he received the following telegram: 'Come at once to 100 Goldsmith Street, Drury Lane.—AKHURST.' He started at once, and by mid-day arrived at the address—a poor house in a not very stylish street. A decent servant, however, opened the door and showed him up-stairs. On the landing, Marian Akhurst met him. Her face was very grave, and as she returned his grasp of the hand, she said: 'You are too late, Dick. She—you know who I mean—passed away half an hour ago. It was a terrible death. She cried constantly for you, and, as you did not come, gave me a message of terrible import for you.'

'I think I know it, Marian,' said the young man. 'My poor Uncle Christopher was murdered.'

Marian bowed assent; then she said: 'I was sent for last night, not by Mrs Marsden, but by the woman who keeps this house, for our Institution is, as you know, close by. I found the poor creature hanging between life and death: the room was hardly bearable from the fumes of opium; and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could piece together what she had to say. It amounted to this. That being in desperate straits from debt on the evening when you said that your uncle was going from London for the winter, she suggested to her father that the relief which would come by your inheritance of your uncle's fortune would be hastened by his death. Her father instantly jumped at the idea; took a ticket for Dover by the same train as your uncle was going by, and got into his compartment. When the train slackened speed in obedience to signals, and your uncle was looking out of window to see the reason, the crime was committed: her father sprang out of the train, and sprained his ankle in so doing. But she was the instigator of the crime, and the remorse for this was intensified by your kindness to her.

That was all she could say, except that she hoped for your forgiveness on account of her terrible mental sufferings.'

A year later, the Bennington Society of Ancient Chums was assembled in full strength upon a very special occasion, which was nothing less than the presentation to Mr Robert Martin of a handsome token of respect and affection upon his retirement from the post of President, which he had occupied for so many years, in order to enter upon his duties as butler to Mr and Mrs Marsden at the Grange.

Doubly convivial was the meeting, for that day Dick Marsden and Marian Akhurst had been married at the village church, and the members of the Society wore white rosettes in honour of the occasion.

And yet—will it be believed?—Bob Martin turned up five minutes late, and had to be fined, his excuse, that he had mislaid the copy of the speech in which he had intended to return thanks for the great honour done him, not being accepted!

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHAT is denominated Liquid Air has recently been attracting much attention in scientific circles. As is well known, matter is presented to us in three different forms—the solid, the liquid, and the gaseous, and we have examples all around us of these three distinct shapes which natural things assume. A favourite one for illustration by the physicist is water, for, according to the temperature to which it is subjected, it will represent a solid, a liquid, or a gas. And this question of temperature is one which determines the form in which other bodies than water shall present themselves, among which we need only refer to the metals. For a long time, however, it was supposed by chemists and others that the gaseous elements known as hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen could exist only in one form; and up to within recent times they were described in the text-books as 'permanent gases.' Some far-seeing physicists indeed prophesied that with improved apparatus these so-called 'permanent' gases would one day be found to bow to what seemed a natural law, and would be liquefied. The prophecy came true at the end of the year 1877, when MM. Cailletet and Pictet succeeded in doing that which had baffled the skill of all their predecessors, and two of the gases referred to were reduced to the liquid state. As a natural sequel to these historic experiments, that combination of oxygen and nitrogen which represents the air which we breathe was also exhibited in a liquid form.

MM. Cailletet and Pictet produced very small quantities of these hitherto unknown liquids, for the apparatus which they employed was of but limited capacity. It has been reserved for Professor Dewar, by working with extremely low temperatures, to produce a liquid oxygen and liquid air in such large quantities that their curious and unsuspected properties can be demonstrated very clearly. Thus, he has shown at the Royal Institution that liquid oxygen is highly magnetic, while

it is no longer that active supporter of combustion that it is whilst in the gaseous condition. Liquid air, too, seems to lose all the chemical properties which it possesses as a gas. These experiments are doubtless but the beginnings of a new line of research into the constitution of matter.

Great preparations have been made to observe the eclipse of the sun which will take place on April 15-16. The line of totality passes through both South America and Africa, and the places most favourably situated for observation stations are Chili, Brazil, and Senegambia. The Chili station is under the care of Professor Pickering, and two expeditions have been sent from England—one to Ceara, in Brazil, and the other to Senegambia, where the French have also sent an expedition. It need hardly be said that photography will play an important part in all these observations, and one novel feature is indicated in the employment of a Dallmeyer's new telephotographic lens, which will afford an image of the sun of unusual size. It has been arranged that two similar sets of photographs shall be taken in Africa and at Brazil, stations more than two thousand miles apart, and with an interval of five hours between them. Photographs of the coronal spectrum will also be taken. It is to be hoped that favourable weather will crown these preparations with the success which they deserve.

The white-lead industry has long been known as one of those manufacturing processes which quickly bring disease and death to those engaged in it, and from time to time improved methods have been described in these pages which have been invented with a view to put an end to such lamentable results. The most recent of these is that of Mr J. B. Hannay, which has for some time been in operation at Possil Park, Glasgow, by which a sulphate of lead is produced instead of a carbonate, as under the old Dutch process. This new white-lead, which is quite innocuous to the workers, is made direct from the cheapest lead ore, which is crushed and fed into coke furnaces. The heat combined with an air-blast causes the lead to volatilise, and the fumes are carried to a tower, where they meet a current of steam. Finally, the lead is absorbed by water, and is run off as a creamy-white fluid into settling-tanks. From these tanks it passes into filter presses, where the white sludge is deprived of its moisture, after which it is dried and packed for market. The operation is quick, the product is good, but more than all, the process does not injure the workers.

Professor Marshall Ward has lately reported to the Royal Society the results of some experiments which tend to prove that the action of sunlight is a far more powerful factor in the purification of the atmosphere than has hitherto been imagined. Among other observations, he has discovered that the *Anthrax bacillus* is killed by direct sunlight, although it will withstand the greatest extremes of temperature. Sunlight acts in the same way in the purification of water.

It has often been noted that those in the habit of using vinegar and oil as regular articles of diet very rarely suffer from choleraic symptoms. M. Haschimodo has pointed out the reason of this immunity from disease, in the fact that acetic

acid and the *Comma bacillus* are antagonistic. After being subjected for fifteen minutes to the action of vinegar containing from three to four per cent. only of acetic acid, it was found that the bacilli are killed. It need hardly be pointed out that good table vinegar contains naturally a larger proportion of the acid.

A scheme has for some time been under consideration for connecting North-west and South-west London by means of an electric underground railway, and recently opposition to it has come from an unexpected quarter. The line, as planned, will pass through South Kensington; and the schools for scientific training there, by the voice of their Professors, declare that the vibration from the line will render exact measurements impossible, while the electrical instruments will be liable to induction disturbances, which will quite prohibit their use. It will be remembered that the existing electric railway which crosses the Thames' bed close to London Bridge is found to cause disturbances of the magnetic instruments of the Greenwich Observatory, nearly four miles away; so that there is some ground for the fears of the science masters at South Kensington that a similar railway only a quarter of a mile from their doors will interfere with the delicate apparatus under their charge.

In his Report upon the terrible accident which occurred to the Scotch express at Thirsk a few months ago, owing to the default of a signalman, Major Marindin points out that there are many ingenious combinations of electrical and mechanical appliances which if maintained in good order would make such a catastrophe impossible, unless a driver were deliberately determined to neglect all signals. He insists that it is the duty of all railway companies to provide themselves with such safeguards as will prevent the safety of a train from depending upon one signalman. On three lines of railway, devices of the kind referred to have been in general use for some years, and have been found satisfactory.

A National Photographic Exhibition is to be opened at the Crystal Palace on Monday, April 10th, and will close on Saturday, the 29th. The nave of this enormous building with its wealth of light is peculiarly fitted for the display of pictures, and it is believed that the Exhibition will be as successful as those of past years. Last year, photography had to give place to the Electric Exhibition, there being no room to accommodate both at the same time.

The new French national theatre, the Comédie-Française, is fitted with a novel form of drop-curtain, which rises or falls at different rates of speed by the touch of an electric button. The movement is brought about by the agency of a small electro-motor, and as the curtain is balanced by a counterweight, the motor has only to overcome the inevitable friction of the apparatus. The current is obtained from the street mains, and the innovation is said to meet every requirement. It may be mentioned that all sparking is avoided by substituting, for the usual metallic contacts, brushes made of carbon, a device first introduced by Professor George Forbes.

Many conflicting reports have appeared with regard to the cost of electric lighting as compared with gas, and those interested in the subject find it next to impossible to obtain reliable

information. In his Report to the Electric Lighting Committee of the Lambeth vestry (London), Mr Preece remarks that it has been the fashion to regard the light as a luxury only for the rich; but experience at Newcastle shows that it is now within the grasp of the poor man. The average cost per electric lamp at Newcastle was last year 6s. 3d., while at Bradford it was 9s. 7d. The great difference in these two quotations is not accounted for.

Zimer's Patent Boat, which is operated after the manner of a cycle, presents many new features. The occupant rides upon a saddle, and the treadles, actuated by his feet, work either a propeller or a stern paddle-wheel. His hands hold a horizontal bar—as in a bicycle—the movement of which causes paddles to work alternately on either side of the little vessel. The boat is said to be far more efficient in a rough sea than an ordinary row-boat, while at the same time it is well adapted for use in smooth water. As the chief work is thrown upon the legs, which are, as a rule, better capable of performing continuous muscular exertion than the arms, it is claimed for the new boat that it is far less fatiguing to use than a row-boat, while at the same time it requires no skill to work it.

Every winter we hear of northern ports being blocked by ice, and it is easily understood that the results to commerce of a long-continued frost must in those localities be most disastrous. About ten years ago the experiment was tried at Gothenburg, in Sweden, of constructing a heavily-built steamer, whose duty it should be to force a path through the ice, so as to keep the port open all the year round. This vessel was constructed, and was found most effective in use. In the year 1885, when the ice was a foot thick, it broke and maintained a wide passage to the open sea, thus affording waterway for incoming and outgoing vessels. This favourable experience of the use of an ice-breaking steamer has caused other ports to order vessels of the same character, Christiania and Stockholm being among the number. One of these was recently described in a Swedish paper as having a spoon-like bow, which presses on the ice and crushes it in. It is also said that the boat is provided with tanks both fore and aft, which are connected by pumps, so that when any extra weight is required at the bow, the pumps are set to work to transfer the water from the stern tanks to those in front of the vessel.

Several cases of poisoning from eating tinned beef having occurred at Ohio in October last, says the *Chemical News*, the food was analysed for tin and lead, the physicians having given it as their opinion that the poison was due to the action of the meat upon the can; but no traces of those metals could be found. It was then suspected that the mischief was due to the formation in the meat of Ptomaines, and the tests for these were at once proceeded with. As a result, it was decided by the analysts that there were no inorganic poisons, such as tin or lead, present in the meat; that the poison after a time lost its toxic qualities, a thing which could not have occurred in the case of inorganic poisoning; further, that a ptomaine called 'Neuridine' has been recorded, which decomposes a short time after it has been formed. Therefore, it is stated, the poison was a ptomaine, and may be identi-

fied as neuridine. It is evident that, considering the immense quantity of tinned meat now sold, and the few cases of poisoning reported, the risks attending the use of this convenient form of preserved food cannot be very great, possibly not so great as those connected with the consumption of fresh meat.

Tuberculous animals are said to be quite common in the London cowsheds, and a Royal Commission is now sitting to consider the question of these diseased animals and the effect upon the community of drinking their milk or eating their flesh. Before this Commission had time to issue its Report, a deputation from the London County Council waited upon the Board of Agriculture to ask for powers to slaughter such animals and to compensate their owners out of the public purse. This shows that at last attention is really being directed by the authorities to this most important matter.

It is said that the recent trial of the dynamite guns on board the United States cruiser *Vesuvius* has demonstrated facts which will revolutionise naval warfare. In describing the Zaluski Pneumatic Gun, some years ago, of which these are the improved successors, we likened it to an enormous pea-shooter, which by a puff of compressed air would send a shell containing half a ton of dynamite with terrible certainty towards an object more than a mile distant. The precision and range have been vastly improved since that date, and the *Vesuvius*, with her three long tube-like guns, represents the most awfully destructive engine of war which has yet been constructed. It is certain that the most powerful ship would be utterly annihilated if touched by one of these explosive projectiles.

The landing of a herd of one hundred and eighty domesticated reindeer in Alaska last summer, along with native Siberian drivers, marks a new departure in the social life of that territory. It is the first herd imported into the Western Continent. The advent of the whalers off the coast of Alaska has helped to exhaust the food supply of the coast Eskimos, while the American fish canneries have been exhausting the salmon supplies in the rivers, so that the population was decreasing with the diminution of the food supplies, and something had to be done to remedy this. Not without difficulty was a Bill for aid passed through Congress, and not without difficulty could the reindeer at first be procured in Siberia. But all obstacles were overcome, and the deer have been lodged at Port Clarence, seventy-five miles south of Behring Strait. Here, after two years' instruction, the native Eskimos, if they prove diligent and capable, will be given a herd of ten reindeer. Other reindeer stations will also be established. It is expected that these animals will take the place of dogs in Alaska, owing to their superior endurance, and capacity for picking up a living where a dog would starve. And of course in the arctic and subarctic regions, besides being a beast of burden, the reindeer supplies the natives with both food and clothing.

The *Handels-Museum* states that at the last meeting at Hanover of the Brunswick-Hanover Society of Beet-sugar Makers, a Berlin doctor made an interesting communication relative to a new substance, called *vulvin*, which would appear to be about to supplant saccharin, and will per-

haps be a serious competitor to the sugar industry. This substance, discovered in 1883 by a Berlin chemist, is at present produced in that town according to a patented process. It will be about two hundred times sweeter than sugar, and will not have certain disagreeable properties of saccharin. Several experts are engaged in examining this substance.

The *Paris Journal des Mines* announces that the inauguration of the Corinth Canal has been fixed for the 23d April (5th May) next. According to the conditions of the contract, the works must be finished in May. In any case, they will be actively pushed forward, so that the inauguration fêtes coincide with the above-mentioned date.

The *Adelaide Observer* states that the Central Agricultural Bureau of South Australia were recently notified that the lavender plant had taken possession of about three acres of soil at Black Swamp, in the southern portion of that colony. The settlers in the neighbourhood of the swamp were inclined to look with disfavour upon the 'weed,' which the horses and cattle would not eat, and which spread so rapidly. One of them, however, discovered that the weed was no other than the lavender plant, and very valuable, though not as a fodder. From two to three tons of green stuff taken from it will yield when distilled by a very simple process one hundred pounds worth of lavender oil. In addition it would give sixteen hundred pounds of lavender water, worth eightpence per pound after the first distillation, and one and sixpence per pound after further distillation, which would of course leave a smaller quantity. The settler who was wise enough to make inquiries has decided, acting upon the advice of Mr Molineux, Secretary to the Agricultural Bureau, to plant a considerable area of lavender. The soil, of a light sandy nature, with clay beneath, and fairly moist, is eminently suited to the growth, not only of lavender, but of all scent-producing plants.

A correspondent who was much interested in a paragraph of 'The Month' in the *Journal* of October 29, 1892, as to whether ants are friends or foes to the fruit-grower, writes: 'Here in the Argentine Republic we have at any rate two kinds of black ants, one of which has a small white hump, and does not touch fruit-trees, &c.; but the other one is our greatest enemy, for where these black ants are it is simply impossible to grow fruit-trees, flowers, vegetables, or indeed anything. These ants do not make mounds, but burrow deep down about six feet underground, although they have been known as low as twelve feet. Here they carry scraps of anything they can lay hold of for their nests; and sometimes they have as many as three or four tunnels going down to them. Some men make it quite a specialty to trace these nests and to destroy them, and large sums of money are paid to have it done. Only last year *all* our plants, trees, and vegetables were completely eaten away by these ants. For a long time the man whom we employed could not trace the nest; finally, he did so, finding it twelve feet below the dining-room floor. With the aid of kerosene and water he made a pudding of ants and eggs, and we have not had a solitary ant since. This took place in

the country; but it is just the same in town (Rosario), where the people have to grow their plants in tubs, putting little tins of water round the foot of the tubs.'

THEIR WEDDING DAY.

THE village of Tong looked fair enough this June morning. The sun was bright, the sky cloudless. From the old gabled, half-timber cottages near the church the folks had hung coloured pocket-handkerchiefs, blue cloth, red flannel, and what-not—anything for a gala appearance. There was also a string set across from the elm by the lighthouse to the house of old Gumm, the sexton; and real bunting, pennons, Union-jacks, and so forth, hung from the string, and fluttered gently in the summer breeze. Chief decoration of all, however, was the arch of evergreens studded with roses just outside the red-brick house of the Darlings. It bore the words, 'Joy be with thee!' done in white carnations.

Eva Darling was the bride. Her mother had occupied the Retreat—as the red house with the high walls round it was called—for about ten years. She was a widow, and Eva was her only child.

When first the Darlings came to Tong, the villagers did not half care for the new-comers. Mrs Darling kept herself to herself a deal too much for their pride's comfort. But as Eva grew from a girl of ten to a girl of fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen, there was no standing against her charms. There was a governess for her in those days. Despite the laws of the Retreat, however, on the subject of intercourse with the villagers, the girl went to and fro with a basket, and, in short, played the part of ministering angel extremely well. Thus she won the hearts of the simple but strongly prejudiced people.

It was only with the gentry of the Great House that Mrs Darling cared to associate. The Great House stood a mile from the church across a spacious reach of undulating parkland, with a pond and a river in it, and some remarkably fine trees. 'Great House' was just the phrase for it. There were about fifty windows in front for the sun to stare at. It stretched like a white buttress between the green of the parkland and the dark wooded hill behind it.

No one could say the Great House was a handsome place. But Mrs Darling was not concerned with mere architectural beauties. From the first, when she knew there were two young masculine Dantins in the family, respectively three and four years older than her daughter, this lady was resolved that one of them should marry Eva. Of course the elder son was to be preferred; but as the younger was rich by inheritance from the mother, it would not matter so very much which made the girl Mrs Dantin.

They were young men of very opposite characters, these Dantins. It is always the case when there are but two in a family. Nature seems determined that the type shall then be varied as much as possible. Philip, the elder, was studious and fond of scientific pursuits. At Oxford, he had kept a menagerie like Frank Buckland. He was a good-looking fellow, but wore spectacles: slow to be angered, but with a temper that when

roused was capable of dark deeds. He was slow in other respects also. Thus, for a while he was sorely distressed when he heard that his brother Jack had wooed and won Eva Darling ere he had settled in his own mind that he himself was ripe for marriage with the same girl. Anon he seemed to smother the resentment he could hardly help feeling; but it was mere 'seeming': his jealousy burned his heart.

As for Jack Dantin, he was the very fellow to secure a girl like Eva. He cared nothing for insects and butterflies, but everything for athletic pursuits and pretty faces. He was a handsome lad, frank and generous. He knew early in his courtship that he had but to ask Eva to marry him. The girl's dark eyes could not keep their secret; her cheek, too, told of it with a blush every time they met. And so they had plighted their troth, and were duly to be married this June morning. They were likely to make a very comely couple at the altar, with the great tombs of departed Dantins north and south of them.

Meanwhile, however, though everything was ready for the bridal procession to leave the Retreat and cross the road, there was delay. It was to be a quiet wedding. A dozen friends of the Darlings were in the drawing-room, talking and smiling and enjoying the perfume of the flowers which lay on the tables. Still, there was clearly a hitch somewhere. The smiles were somewhat forced, and the guests fell silent suddenly now and then.

Mrs Darling made civil forays into their midst at intervals. She was evidently a strong-minded woman, as was indicated by her composed manner, her hard incisive tones, and her cold, searching blue eyes.

Some one was caught whispering, 'Will it not have to be postponed?'

The words reached Mrs Darling's ears. 'Oh no,' she replied promptly, with an icy but sparkling smile. 'Dear Eva is quite satisfied that John Dantin will not fail to be present. He is a man of his word.'

'Yes; but dear Mrs Darling—it is so very odd, this sudden disappearance,' objected one of the guests.

'Three days ago,' added Mrs Darling.—'Yes; there's no denying it. But Jack Dantin is an odd fellow, though an excellent one besides.'

Here Eva herself entered the drawing-room, and all eyes sped towards her. An audible murmur of satisfaction arose, and certain men of the party envied the bridegroom involuntarily. She was a beautiful bride, undeniably. Though pale and disturbed—as any maiden in her place would have been—there was such sweetness in her expression that for the moment people forgot that she had cause for anxiety. Three or four damsels of her own age crowded about her, voluble with congratulations.

'My dear,' said her mother, 'it is a quarter to eleven. We had better start.'

Eva's eyes asked the question that every one else was asking: 'Has he come?'

'Do not fear,' was Mrs Darling's reply. 'Of course he will be there. He will not dare'—Then she stopped. There had been a momentary flash in her eyes of a very pugnacious kind.

And so the procession formed and walked over the crimson cloth which stretched from the porch

to the garden gate, where the motto, 'Joy be with thee!' looked down on them. A gust of wind set the pocket-handkerchiefs and bits of flannel fluttering merrily. A murmur of voices also greeted the bride's appearance. About once in half a century Tong saw a wedding of this kind. It was a spectacle by no means to be lost. A certain bedridden villager had been carried into the bit of a garden in front of his cottage, bedding and all, to behold the sight.

Twenty paces brought them to the churchyard gate. The graves were nice and green, and the sheep nibbling among them did not seem at all frightened by so much human company. Thus they passed into the church, not without many a furtive glance over the park towards the Great House, which, at Mr Dantin's bidding, was flying the royal banner in spite of young Jack's absence.

Inside, they were met with almost a caressing tenderness by Mr Dantin and a sad shake of the head. 'I am sorry,' he said to Mrs Darling, 'that your resolution was not to be shaken.'

The lady tossed her head slightly, and seemed disposed to be angry. 'It is a most extraordinary thing,' she exclaimed, looking at the clock in the west of the church. It wanted eight minutes to the time.

The old rector put a gay face on the business. Why, in truth, should he not? He had buried and wedded so many people that he had come to view neither ceremony as so very important.

'You will have to come again another day, my dear Miss Eva,' he said, 'that is all. You must not mind. It is the linked sweetness of expectation, long drawn out, that is all.'

'But'—and for once there was a touch of petulance in the girl's voice as her eyes clouded with tears—'it is so unlike him. I fear something must have happened to him.—Philip,' she added, making a sudden appeal to the man who was to have been made her brother-in-law—'have you any idea what it means?'

'I? How should I?' was the reply, as the elder Dantin shuffled away.

Philip's face was unusually pale. There was no candour in his eye—even seen through his spectacles.

Outside the church and in the body of the building the whispers were of a more emphatic nature. The village gossips claimed to have a very profound knowledge of the iniquity of young men. It was said openly that Master Jack had no doubt played the girl a sad trick, was, as like as not, at that very moment marrying some one else in London town, and that the best thing they could do for Miss Eva was to take her home, put her to bed, and treat her for hysterics whether she showed them or not.

'Poor young crittur! So sweet-tempered and nice-looking, to be trickit in sech a way!'

There were comments on Mr Philip's white face, which led on to comparisons between the two brothers. These were not markedly adverse to the elder son; but upon the whole they were in favour of 'Master Jack,' who was the more free with his money.

'He'll marry she, hisself, yo'll see,' said one woman very positively.

'What—now? Instead of his own brother! I do call that'—

'Oh, you silly!' was the interposed reply—'not jest yet, o' coorse. They'll wait a bit—yo'll see.'

Three minutes to eleven, and still no bridegroom!

For an explanation of this unusually dramatic scene in Tong church we must go back three days. Philip Dantin had striven to keep his rage against his brother within due bounds, but had failed. His stuffed specimens in the subterranean rooms could not console him; nor could his live beasts either. These underground rooms were quite a remarkable feature of the Great House. They dated from the sixteenth century, if not earlier. For a hundred years or more they were disused. Philip, however, persuaded his father to expend money in making them tolerably habitable, and very suitable for the kind of museum he had accumulated. The farthestmost of them was the very 'sanctum sanctorum' of his operations. At its extreme end there was an ancient doorway of chiselled stone several inches in thickness, and beyond that, utter darkness and the beginning of a labyrinth which had not been explored for ages, and was left to itself. It was believed to have no issue.

On this third evening before the day that was to make him a happy fellow, Jack Dantin found his way into his brother's den to have a chat with him. For a time Philip bore with his high spirits uncomplainingly, though Jack's praises of Eva were like so many thorns in his side. Eventually, however, his patience gave way. He uttered an exclamation which made his brother start in surprise.

'Why, old fellow, what is the matter? You surely don't'—He stopped. There was that in Philip's face which told him much.

'Yes; you have guessed it,' said Philip with a shrug of the shoulder. 'It is rather hard; but the less said about it the better. Twenty years hence, it will not matter a straw.'

Jack was silent. He sympathised with his brother more than he could tell in words.

Then it was that, like a lightning flash, the dreadful suggestion rushed into Philip's mind. 'Oh, by the way,' he said casually, 'I wish you would oblige me by giving a hand to this skinned thing. I want it out of my road for a time.'

'Certainly, Phil. Where shall we cart it?' was the reply, as Jack surveyed the gruesome body of a flayed alligator, upon which the elder Dantin had been operating.

'The passage is just the place for it. I'll find the key.'

The key was found; the heavy stone door was swung open; they carried their disgusting burden into the dark corridor; and then Philip, who was nearest the room, slipped back, banged the door, and locked it, and had sped up-stairs and into the park in a remarkably short space of time. He threw the key into one of the ponds, and then fell to congratulating himself upon his diabolical conduct.

Since then, he had not visited his museum. The doors were all fast locked. No one could get access to them. If Jack Dantin shouted till his lungs burst, no one would hear him.

It may be imagined what a wretched yet fearfully glad time this interval before the wedding

to-day was for Philip Dantin. He professed to be entirely ignorant of his brother's whereabouts, but hinted at having seen him striding across country towards a certain large town whence there was constant train connection with London.

The elder Dantin and the servants had every confidence in Jack's reappearance in time for the wedding, and that until the eve of the day itself. Philip, too, expressed his agreement with this view of the matter.

In fact, however, poor Jack, when he realised what had befallen him, gave himself up for lost. It was terrible to remember where he was, under such woful circumstances; and stunning to recall that it was his own brother who had incarcerated him. As the hours sped by, he saw clearly that he was destined to die, and that Philip meant to profit by his death. Like most habitual smokers, he carried matches with him. For a time he was lavish with them; then he husbanded them. The hours passed. His watch told him that it was night. He wound it up, slept, reawakened, and struck more matches.

In the meantime he had thought of many things. But in one thing only did he take any interest. The passion of self-preservation was strong in him, for his own sake and for Eva's. He resolved to try the passages to see if haply he might prove the truth of the old legend which made them a sort of arterial connection between the church and the Great House. The first day was spent in these grim gropings, which seemed like to be only too futile. Their only result was to make him lose himself in the stifling maze. That night he slept he knew not where, with a block of chiselled stone for a pillow. A match-light had shown him that he was in a sort of *cul-de-sac*—a pile of stone fragments, earth, and bits of iron barring the way, as it seemed, to future progress in that direction.

This second night was a sorrowful one indeed. There were times when the poor fellow felt he should lose his senses. At last, however, he slept; and when he awoke, he struck one more match, and then, as Providence willed it, espied on the ground a morsel of coloured glass, as if it had fallen at some time from a window. The sight instantly made him forget his maddening hunger and despair, and he set to work upon the barrier that was before him.

How he toiled at his task! At first he burrowed with his fingers; latterly he used a sharp-edged piece of stone shaped like a chisel. All day he worked. The wall diminished in thickness. A sudden breath of air in his face told him he had made a clean breach somewhere, though he could not feel where. He worked on through the night. His wedding day dawned above, and he was still boring in this noisome hole for dear life and his bride.

Gradually the current of air increased in volume, and at length he had made a passage through which he could worm his way. He looked at his watch by the light of his last match but one; it was nine o'clock of his wedding morning.

Though ready to faint from fatigue and exhaustion, he went on in this new passage, groping like a mole. It seemed to him that he

had lived all his days in darkness. Ten o'clock! half-past ten! a quarter to eleven! At a quarter to eleven he was suddenly dazzled by a faint streak of blessed daylight. It was far in front of him—or seemed so. He ran towards it on hands and knees, touched a wooden door with his fingers, uttered a cry of joy, pushed the door, which yielded, and saw before him a thick red curtain, which he recognised in a moment as belonging to the vestry of Tong church.

Three minutes to eleven, and still no bridegroom! A second later, however, Jack Dantin staggered from the vestry door into the church, and saw and was seen by the wedding party—a sorry spectacle of mud and mire, bruised and bleeding, and with his clothes torn in all directions.

'I am not too late after all,' he cried, and then down he fell by the altar railings.

Some one also fell almost at the same instant. Philip Dantin went pale as a corpse when he saw his brother. He made a step towards Eva, whispered 'Forgive' in a hoarse voice, and reeled upon the pavement.

Philip Dantin's mind was unhinged by his crime and its consequences. He lived for several weeks, and then died. Before his death, however, Jack freely forgave him the cruel deed which he had wrought in a moment of jealousy that was close kin to insanity. The secret of it stayed in his own breast, though others had inkings of it.

Eva Darling was a bride in good earnest three days after her bridegroom's startling entrance into the church.

WHILE I WAIT.

DEAR, while I wait for you, I would not steep
My wearied senses in soft slumber's dreams,
As he who hates the night and waits the gleams
Of gladsome day-dawn—nay, nor would I weep
Through the long vigil, that I needs must keep,
With folded, idle hands, until the streams
Of love-light fall on me, and its glad beams
End the sad watch, or wake me from my sleep.
Ah no! I would my hands had swifter grown
To aid all need—my lips had learned a new
Sweet power to bless—my voice a tend'rer tone—
My eyes a deeper pity—this heart, too,
This poor, weak woman's heart you know your own,
God's perfect peace, dear, while I wait for you!

KATE MELLERSH.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.
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AMONG THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS.

THE Gulf of St Lawrence has its dark isle of woe as well as the Atlantic. Even as Sable Island is the Graveyard of the Ocean, so is the Magdalen group the Graveyard of the St Lawrence. But little is known of this group, which is not surprising, inasmuch as it belongs geographically, although not politically, to the least known (to Britishers) of all the provinces of the Canadian Confederation—Prince Edward Island. It is not a hundred years since an English writer described Prince Edward Island as a rascally heap of sand, rock, and swamp, fit for nothing but a military station and a potato-field; to-day, the island is frequently spoken of as the garden of British North America.

To the north of Prince Edward Island, and to the north-west of Cape Breton, well in the heart of the Gulf of St Lawrence, lies the little group of the Magdalen Islands, responsible for many a wreck, and notable for many things, although even the name may be strange to the average reader. It is placed, roughly speaking, about midway between the island of Newfoundland and the mainland of Nova Scotia, and therefore right in the track of southward-bound vessels from the St Lawrence, and of all, indeed, which do not find it convenient to make use of the Strait of Belleisle. And unlike that of the Bay of Fundy, which separates Nova Scotia from New Brunswick to the south of the Isthmus of Chignecto, the navigation of the Lawrentian Gulf is by no means safe at all seasons of the year. The Magdalens, again, face—although at a considerable distance—the entrance to the Bay of Chaleurs, which, of an average width of twenty miles, separates New Brunswick from the peninsula of Gaspé—notable as the point where Jacques Cartier found his first landing-place.

Gaspé, as also the Magdalens, the Bird Rocks, the islands of Anticosti and Brion, and the Seven Islands, all belong to the province of Quebec. To the north of the group with which

we are concerned just now are the large island of Anticosti, with a sub-arctic climate and flora, a dismal wreck-record, and elaborate life-saving appliances; the verdant Seven Islands, which Whittier calls 'the last outpost of summer upon the dreary coast;' and farther away towards the open Atlantic, the little island of Meccatina, where the Huguenot Robernal abandoned his niece, Margaret, and where he left her in lonely banishment for two years, after losing her lover and her duenna, until she was rescued by a passing vessel.

About three hundred and sixty years ago Jacques Cartier set forth from St Malo with two little ships of sixty tons each, to find out more about the strange lands of Newfoundland and Labrador, discovered by the Cabots and Jaspard Cortereal. He left St Malo on the 20th of April 1534, and passing through the Strait of Belleisle, sailed along the barren coast of Labrador and all round Newfoundland. He then shaped his course to the south-west, and found the Magdalen Islands, upon which he landed to explore, there—after sailing still to the west until he entered the Bay of Chaleurs, so called by him because of the tremendous heat of the July day on which he was 'the first that ever burst into that silent sea.' He landed on the rocky peninsula of Gaspé, and there planted the flag of France, in token of possession. It was not until the next year that he entered the river St Lawrence, and called it so because it was on the fête-day of the saint that he began the ascent of the stream.

The Magdalens, then, are directly associated with the real discovery of Canada by Cartier, and have thus an historical interest of their own—just as Sable Island has, as the scene of the first actual European settlement in North America.

The Magdalen group consists of four islands, the nearest land being Cape Breton, about fifty-five miles off. The islands are named Coffin, Saunders, Wolfe, and Amherst, the largest being Coffin Island. The population in 1871 was 3172: it is now estimated at about 6000.

When Jacques Cartier discovered them in 1534,

he reported the islands as well wooded and verdant, with large tracts of meadow-land alternating with swamp and forest. Little of these forests remain, for the fine trees of the Magdalens yielded such excellent timber for building purposes that they have been practically all used up. Only a few stunted clumps of fir and spruce may now be seen where once were magnificent groves; and indeed so short is now the supply of wood on these once sylvan islands, that the inhabitants are now compelled to import coal for fuel.

The physical aspect of the Magdalens as seen from the sea is imposing enough. They present to the eye a succession of towering cliffs, rising apparently sheer from the sea to a height of from two hundred to four hundred feet. Against these cliffs, the long rollers of the Lawrentian Gulf, after their chase across the Atlantic, beat ceaselessly and angrily, so that the islands seem to be swathed in a perpetual setting of seething foam.

A constant warfare between sea and land is here in progress, and now and again one finds that the sea has been victorious, and has hammered at the base of some grand cliff until the rock has collapsed and mingled its fragments with the strand. On one side, indeed, the sea seems to be wholly victorious, and to be gradually winning possession; but elsewhere one finds quiet lagoons and marshes, which are being slowly formed into dry land by the distributed debris of the shattered cliffs. Thus a constant process of disintegration and reconstruction is here in progress, in marked contrast to the disintegrating process which threatens—or promises, one should rather say with regard to such an area of sorrow—to sweep Sable Island in time into the bottomless ocean.

Although discovered and much admired by Cartier in 1534, the Magdalens do not seem to have attracted any settlers for more than two hundred years. At all events, we find the first evidence of a French settlement about the year 1757—a settlement of ten families engaged in hunting the seal and the sea-horse, and in fishing for cod and herring. Six years later, in 1763, the islands passed, with the rest of what was then known as New France, into the protection of the British Empire. Thirty-five years later, a grant of the islands was made to Sir Isaac Coffin for his naval services during the American war of Independence, less one-seventh of the produce reserved for the support of the church and the clergy.

From then till now the Magdalens have remained in the possession of the Coffin family, notwithstanding the desire and repeated attempts of the Government of Canada to buy them back. The Coffin family cherish the property as a gift of honour, and attach a higher sentimental value to it than the Government are willing to express in dollars.

Between 1871 and 1891 the population of the Magdalens about doubled. Last year it was computed at about six thousand—all French-Canadians with the exception of some five or six hundred English-Canadians and settlers from Jersey. The English inhabitants are engaged as farmers and tradesmen; the French as fishers and merchants.

When Cartier discovered the islands, he re-

ported large numbers of sea-monsters along the shores, with two tusks in their mouths. These were the walrus, although he did not know it, and the early settlers found its pursuit their most profitable occupation. Generally speaking, the walrus was then regarded among mariners as only second in value to the whale; but there was no whale-fishing at the Magdalens. Walrus oil always brought a good price in those days; and then, besides the value of the tusks as ivory, there was the value of the hide for leather. Altogether, walrus-hunting was so profitable that it resulted very much as the Americans fear will the hunting of the fur-seal in Behring Sea—in extirpating the species. At all events, the walrus has been practically driven away by the hunters from the Magdalens, only an occasional specimen being now seen in place of the sportive shoals observed by Cartier.

The hair-seal, however, is still hunted with assiduity and with profit, and the exports of seal-oil are valued at from three thousand to four thousand pounds per annum. Cod are caught in large numbers in the surrounding waters, and form the basis of a permanent industry. Herring, mackerel, and lobster are also fished, but with less steadiness. Of late the curing of lobsters has been introduced, and promises to become a considerable industry.

We have said that geographically the Magdalens belong to Prince Edward Island, to which fertile land the soil of the Magdalens bears a remarkable resemblance; and the fertility of Prince Edward Island is proverbial. The usual crops are oats, hay, and potatoes; and rich old grass-lands have yielded crop after crop of hay without any more trouble than the ingathering. On such fine pastures stock ought to flourish; but the native breeds, presumably the descendants of the first French settlers, are not very good, and an infusion of Prince Edward Island stock has been of late imported with a view to improvement. Fruit does not flourish since the islands were deforested.

The people are poor, but well conditioned—uneducated, but honest and industrious. They are noted for their native courtesy to all, and for the domestic virtues of the women. The female Magdaleners seem Jacks—or Jills—of all trades. They help in the fishing and in the garden, mend the nets, plough the fields, spin the wool of their sheep, weave it into cloth, make clothes for the whole family, and fill up their odd moments with cooking, washing, and knitting.

As on the island of Tiree, there is no licensed house in the Magdalens. It does not follow that because liquor is not publicly sold, it is not drunk. But there is certainly no drunkenness, and the Magdaleners are naturally a sober people. Their chief luxury is tobacco, and so universal and extensive is its use, that it may almost be ranked by them as a necessary rather than as a luxury. It is said, however, that the Magdaleners are remarkably superstitious, and have a profound belief not only in the personality of the Evil One, but also in his personal intervention in affairs of individuals, even to the extent of his meddling with the working of the fishing-boat, or assuming the guise of a friend—with intent to deceive.

The whole appearance of the Magdalens near at hand is suggestive of prosperity—when the white buildings of the homesteads and the marts of the fishing-boats are sighted. But in the distance they are dreaded by the navigators of the Gulf of St Lawrence, especially in certain winds, when the set of the currents makes it a difficult thing to avoid impalement on the jagged rocks of these islands. Shipwreck here, too, implies both total loss and frightful mortality. The sands of Sable Island are slow, if cruel; but these rocks are swift at destruction, and not many hours elapse after a vessel strikes until she beats herself to matchwood. If she does get off, it is only to founder immediately in deep water.

The life-saving appliances are extensive and well planned. The points are well marked with lighthouses; rockets are placed at numerous suitable stations, and the whole system is united by telegraph wires. One reason why the Canadian Government wish to re-acquire the islands is to take still greater precautions against their being the death-trap of the mariners of the St Lawrence.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*,
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XV.—PLANS AND PROSPECTS.

WHEN Uncle Harry was gone, Isabel turned her thought again to her father with a new cheerfulness and prospect. If she could contrive to reconcile the brothers, might not they yet live, all three, in happy concord? But she could not yet attempt to bring them together: she must first know her father better and effect considerable improvement in his health and conduct. At present she must act, and neither speculate nor dream. She arrayed herself with care—for she felt it would be an advantage with her father to please his eye—and then went out to take the train to King's Cross. When she left that station she made several purchases, and then entered the bus for New North Road. Arrived there, she looked about for a fishmonger's; and having given an order she went on to her father.

When she was over against Mrs Ackland Snow's she was met by Mr Doughty, newly shaved and brushed. He made her an elegant bow, and walked on by her side, halting a little on his stick. His conversation was impressive, solemn, and somewhat lugubrious. The chief had spent a bad, restless night, and so had he. Had her father, Isabel asked, eaten well? He had eaten the usual 'meal of resistance' about two o'clock—an overdone chop, and little else. But what Mr Doughty chiefly wished to utter at the moment was his unbounded gratitude for what Miss Raynor, he was morally certain, intended to do for her father. He loved and revered the chief—he had been with him for more than twenty years in all variations of temperature and weather—and all he asked for himself was that

he might not be completely cut off from the society of the chief, that he might be allowed occasionally to see and speak with him. And yet another boon he asked.

'I have had a scene with the chief,' said he. 'He wished to know how you found him out, and he asked me full in the face if I had written to you. With his eyes on me I could not prevaricate, as, I confess, I had intended to do: it is an astonishing thing that you *cannot* prevaricate to those eyes of his. I admitted I had written to you. Do not, I beg of you, let him learn that I have written oftener than once; for he would never forgive me if he knew.'

As Isabel entered the little parlour, she saw her father sitting where she had left him the night before, wrapped in an old overcoat, and reading a book. When he rose to greet her, she perceived that he looked gray and pinched with fatigue; and she noted, moreover, that her appearance had called forth in him a dim gush of tender emotion, which passed upon his countenance like a breath upon a mirror. He appeared shyer with her than he had been the night before, and she felt—as only a woman can subtly feel—that he regarded her presentment with distinct approval.

'I knew you would come,' said he, taking both her hands in his, 'but I did not expect to see you so early. Will you excuse me for a minute?'

He retired into an inner room, and Isabel laid aside her hat and jacket, turned to Mr Doughty in haste, and begged his assistance in setting forth the table. Mr Doughty was appalled; for there was, as he said, 'a precarious and perplexing litter' on the table of books and papers. The table was at length cleared, however; and with the aid of a girl tempted up from the basement, who smiled on Isabel in surprise and admiration, the cloth was duly laid. Mr Doughty's spirits gradually rose, till, when Isabel had set out a fowl all ready cooked, bread and butter, and a lettuce and herbs for a salad, and had exhibited a bottle of Burgundy and asked him to draw the cork, he exclaimed: 'Really, Miss Raynor, you appear to me to have made provision for a feast of Apicius!'

There were no wine-glasses to be found; but Isabel thought tumblers would do, and Mr Doughty readily agreed with her; and delicately and lovingly, with just the proper twist, like a father drawing his child's tooth, he drew the cork of the Burgundy.

'Please, 'm,' said the little maid-servant, bursting in, all aglow with excitement, 'here's the winkles!'

'The winkles!' exclaimed Isabel.

'Yass, 'm. The boy's jes' bring 'em from the fish-shop!—on a tray!—such a lot! They do look nice!'

'Oh, the oysters,' said Isabel, and went with a dish to receive them.

'Oysters!' exclaimed Mr Doughty as she went out. 'Let me see; how long is it since the chief and I have tasted an oyster?'

At that instant the chief himself re-entered, clean and clothed, and stood in surprise. He

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did not speak, but his bright eye—bright and open as a child's—quickly compassed the meaning of the display. When his daughter reappeared, bringing in the oysters, tears sprang to his eyes. 'You should not have done this,' he said. 'It is very good of you, but we ate abundantly a few hours ago: did we not, Alexander?'

'We did,' answered Mr Doughty—'sumptuously;' but he added the saving phrase, 'for us.'

'Abundance is relative, father—is it not?' said Isabel with a bright smile. 'But we can talk of that by-and-by. Discussion may, but oysters must not, be kept waiting. Let us sit down and eat, father.—Mr Doughty, will you look after the wine? You understand it.'

She shrewdly guessed her father liked the turn of her phrases, and she had assurance of that when, surveying her deliberately with pride and pleasure, he said: 'I believe you are a very clever girl, my dear. And I have a conviction that a new epoch in my life has begun.' He pressed her hand, and a tear again moistened his eye.

'Now let us eat,' said she.—'No vinegar for me, thank you,' she remarked presently to Mr Doughty. 'I prefer their native flavour.'

"Native flavour," said her father, 'is a good phrase—doubly good.'

'It is certainly "doubly good,"' crackled Mr Doughty; 'for it includes'—

'Oh, pray, Alexander,' exclaimed Mr Raynor, 'do not explain why!—My excellent friend Alexander, my dear,' said he to his daughter, 'has a poor opinion of the human understanding: he always spreads his meaning out in plain, large type.—Really, my dear,' he went on, 'these oysters are extremely good. They help to demonstrate that "Appetite doth grow by what it feeds on."'

'Which is more than can be said—is it not?—for your usual diet, father,' said she. 'Your diet is commonly too abstemious, I believe.'

'No, my dear,' said he; 'I think not. No; we have pretty fairly divided our tastes between the flesh-pots of Egypt and the onions, the leeks, and the garlic—have we not, Alexander?'

'I would exclude the leeks and the garlic, sir,' said Alexander: 'they did not, I believe, come in our way.'

'You are literal, Alexander,' said Mr Raynor.

'I hope,' said his daughter, 'they were at least well cooked.'

'No, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty with feeling; 'they were very ill cooked, indeed, I assure you.'

'That's a pity,' said she; 'for good food well cooked is the source of most of the virtues of men.'

'My dear,' said her father, considering her again with a smile of delight, 'you are a very clever girl, but you appear to have taken up with a very materialistic philosophy.'

Thus their talk went on in apparently aimless fashion, though Isabel, for her part, had a distinct end in view. She had quickly perceived that talk—bright, easy talk—was more to her father than meat and drink, and she had resolved to indulge his taste to the best of her ability, even as she had already determined—will he,

will he—to feed him with nourishing food—all that she might have complete influence with him and gradually build him up again into the stature of a man. Her father well said that she was a very clever girl.

So they talked, and Isabel all the while kept a watchful eye on her father's plate and glass. When they were nearly empty she did not ask him if he would take more, but she quietly replenished them, so that he was not aware what she was about. It was only when his plate was quite cleared and his glass empty—when the salad was all eaten, and the wine all drunk, and when there remained nothing of the fowl but a dismembered skeleton—it was only then that he came to himself.

'The food you have provided, my dear,' said he, 'has a magical effect. I do not seem to have taken much meat and drink, but yet I feel like him who—"on honey-dew hath fed, And drunk the milk of Paradise."—But now let us talk of our plans.'

Mr Raynor left the table and sat in his old easy-chair. 'Let us see,' he said resolutely. 'Of course, my dear, you cannot come and stay here. I think this household is not conceived on such a scale as would admit of it; and the cooking is not good; certainly,' he added with a reflective eye on the table, 'it is not good; and the beds are not soft enough for a lady to lie on.'

'I like a hard bed, father,' said Isabel, humouring his bent.

'You would not like our hard beds here. They are not merely hard: they are rocky. Why, mine often feels to me like a pavement of cobble-stones. I lie down a man, and rise up a bruise. No, this house won't do.—Alexander, we must find other and better rooms. We shall require three bedrooms and a sitting-room, or even a couple of sitting-rooms—a larger and a smaller. I think it might be a good idea to inquire the rent of a flat, Alexander. What do you think?'

'I will inquire, sir,' said Alexander, 'if you desire me to.'

'Now, what rent do you think we can afford, Alexander? Give me a sheet of paper and a pencil—will you?'

Alexander found these articles, and handed them solemnly to him while he continued talking. He reckoned that he and Alexander could earn five hundred pounds a year; Alexander suggested it would be better to say four, but his chief did not agree with him; for, when you are once about it, five is as easy to get as four. So he seriously set himself to calculate on this imaginary basis of income what amount might be disbursed for rent, what for food for three people—and a domestic—and what for clothes and pocket-money. And Isabel sat and listened; she understood her father better than before, and she now perceived how little able he must ever have been to take care of himself and to battle with the world. 'And yet,' she said to herself, 'how sensible he is in his imaginings!—and how well he means, the dear father!—and how generous he would be if he could!' It was, of course, perfectly plain that he intended now to assume the responsibility of his daughter and all her needs—he even presently hinted that it would

be well so to regulate expenditure that something considerable might be put by every year to make a marriage portion for her—and Isabel had not the heart to show that she doubted very much whether any income—to speak of—would be earned by him. She let him think—she believed it would be good for him to think—that he was now about to keep his daughter, and that she was dutifully going to accept his protection.

'You do not ask me, father,' she said, 'if I have any views on this matter.'

'Yes, sir,' said Mr Doughty readily. 'You had better listen to what Miss Raynor may have to say. She is quite as wise in these matters—perhaps wiser than we are.'

'Certainly, my dear, certainly,' said he. 'Forgive me;' and he prepared to give instant heed to what she might say.

'I would like to point out, father,' said Isabel, 'that before we can occupy a flat we must have a tolerable amount of furniture, which will cost a good deal of money at once.'

'True, my dear,' said her father humbly; 'I had not thought of that. I perceive my lapse of actuality.'

'Therefore,' continued Isabel, with inexorable logic, 'we cannot think of occupying a flat for some time. If we try to find nice furnished rooms—that, too, would take some time.'

'Would it, Alexander?' asked her father.

'Some time, certainly,' answered Alexander.

'Now, I have a plan which will work till something better is got ready,' pursued Isabel. 'I cannot come to you here, father, but you can come to me. I have lodgings in a very nice house, and I can arrange for rooms for you and Mr Doughty. That would entail no delay; for you can come at once.'

'At once!' exclaimed her father, turning pale at the thought of having to take immediate action.

'At once,' my dear, is very sudden!

'To-morrow, then,' said Isabel; and, though exciting, that suggestion did not seem so disquieting as the other: he was prepared to discuss it. 'Let us talk about it, my dear,' said he. He doubted whether the landlady would like it; and he doubted 'the equity and prudence' of so sudden a move; and so on.

Isabel was good-naturedly ready to discuss it as much and as frequently as he liked; but she had made up her mind that her father should come to her on the morrow—she would arrange with Mr Doughty to bring him—for she clearly perceived that he, if left to himself, would discuss the matter subtly and casuistically over and over again—and never stir.

When Isabel left her father it was about nine o'clock. She rode from the New North Road to King's Cross outside the omnibus; for the night was warm and fine, being well into June, and the interior of the 'bus would, she knew, be unbearable. She was in high spirits when she set out, with the prospect of success in her mission to her father, and her elevated ride raised them still higher. The air was bland and cool, and the view which spread before her as she descended Pentonville Hill, with the gorgeous, transfused, smoky effect of a London sunset behind the distant pinnacled mass of St Pancras Station, somehow encouraged hope. The world appeared to her very beautiful; even the world of sordid houses

and swarming men and women and children around her was glorified by the mysteries of Life and Love. Her thoughts, of course, mainly dwelt on her father, but, by a subtle and—at first sight—not very apparent connection, they also embraced Alan Ainsworth. She had been led to think of him a good deal during the last day or two, mainly by the coincidence that he, too, was a journalist, as her father was, or had been. Her knowledge of Alan Ainsworth, also, suggested to her the kind of alert, sensitive being her father must have been in the spring of his days, and bound the two together in a common interest in her mind. If the two only knew each other, what a pleasant association it would be! She imagined them sitting over against her, and discussing all things of interest on earth and in heaven—Literature and Art, 'Faith and Free-will, Foreknowledge absolute.' And the best was that she did not put away this picture as impossible of realisation, because she knew that Ainsworth was coming to London, and that sooner or later she must meet him.

Science has had much to say lately concerning the circumambient ether—that it is the subtle medium for the transmission of light and heat, that it is, probably, the element of electricity, and so forth. If the wonderful ether be all that, if it vibrate with light and heat, why should it not vibrate with love, which is of the essence of heat and light combined? Why should it not subtly vibrate and communicate between one heart and another? It is certain that at the same moment when Isabel Raynor was thinking of Alan Ainsworth, Alan Ainsworth was thinking of her—though it must be admitted he had more sedulously thought of her during the last day or two than she had thought of him. He was in London, and had got to work. He had been very much occupied, but yet he had found time to hang about the College for Ladies and the neighbourhood where he knew she lodged, on the chance of encountering her. He longed with all his impulsive soul to see her and to talk with her, though he did not know he had anything particular to say. He had written to Suffield as soon as he had arrived in town; but he had not yet heard from him; and he waited and longed. On this very evening he had walked out of his lodgings to eat his evening meal at a café at King's Cross. He had eaten his food to the accompaniment of chiming thoughts of work and of Isabel; and he had walked out with such thoughts still chiming in his mind, when he chanced to look up and see Isabel descending upon him, as it were from above! Isabel, we know, held a return ticket from King's Cross to Baker Street, and she stood for an instant on the pavement in hesitation whether to descend into the sulphurous atmosphere of the Underground or to sacrifice her ticket and walk the remainder of the way—she stood thus when she became aware of a tall man regarding her from a step or two off. As soon as her eye lighted on him the tall man smiled and approached with his hand out. It was Alan Ainsworth.

'So we have met again,' said he. 'I am very glad. I have been hoping to meet you; but London is such a great place everybody that lives in it seems to revolve in a wider orbit than usual, so that it may take years to cross a friend's course.'

We will get jostled about if we stand here. Which way are you going, Miss Raynor?

'I am on my way home to my lodgings,' said she; 'and I was just considering when I saw you if I should go by train or walk.'

'Oh, walk—please, walk,' said he; 'that is, if it is not too far, and if I may accompany you.'

'It is not so very far,' she answered quietly, though she perceived his eagerness and delight, and though these feelings in him gave a nameless delight to herself. 'My rooms are near Baker Street. But I would not like to take you out of your way; and you may be busy.'

'My way lies westward too; and I am not busy. And even if I were, that would not matter. I have been wishing to meet you, and I've met you.'

'But,' said she with a smile, 'you have not been long in London, have you?'

'Two days,' he answered—'two whole days. I came up sooner than I had intended. A good post was offered to me, if I could enter upon its occupation at once. My late chief let me off; he has been very good to me: I have discovered since I came up that it was he that got me this offer. He has so overwhelmed me with kindness, that I have been wondering whether I have behaved quite well to him.'

'What!' said Isabel. 'You think he has deliberately set himself to heap coals of fire on your head?' And she looked at him mischievously.

'Oh no,' said he, suffused with her look. 'I don't mean that. But I fear I am very egotistical: I have not asked you about yourself and your fortunes.'

'Oh,' said she with a laugh, 'my fortunes are not like yours: they are without excitement. My life swings quietly—for the most part—with a reservation in her mind concerning the past day or two—'between my lodgings and school, and my lodgings. I suppose, then, you are now established as a London journalist. I hope you have done well for yourself in leaving Lancashire.'

'I am assistant-editor and leader-writer on *The Evening Banner*, and my late chief has even recommended me for the theatres on *The None-such*, which is, as you know, a slogging weekly.'

'He seems, indeed, to be taking a kindly vengeance on you. What else has he done?' she asked with a smile. 'Has he not begged you to be so good as take his own place?'

'No,' said he. 'I will talk no more about myself. I have given myself away to you'—and he laughed, partly because of the ambiguity of his sentence—but I did not guess you were an ironical person.'

'Did you not?' said she. 'Is it wicked to be ironical?'

'No, no,' said he; 'but if you absolutely decline to speak of yourself, lest I should be ironical, tell me about your uncles. Mr Suffield has not delighted them yet, I see, with his voice in Parliament; but Mr Raynor has lectured at the Royal Geographical. You went to the lecture, of course?'

Thus they talked as they walked along the Euston Road. Arrived at the corner of Euston Square by the St Pancras Church with its absurd caryatides, he stopped a moment and pointed

down Woburn Place. 'My lodgings,' said he, 'are down there. They are handy for the office and for the Reading Room of the British Museum. Do you ever go to the Reading Room?'

'No,' she answered, again with a spice of mischief; for a woman is never so irrepressibly mischievous as when she is pleased with her companion. 'Why should I go? I am not a literary person at all.'

'You might be if you liked,' said he; 'but I am glad you are not.'

'Why?' she asked. 'Doesn't your assistant-editorial highness not approve of female writers? Would you like to keep writing a close guild for men?'

'Oh no,' he answered to the accompaniment of a fine frank blush: being but a mere blundering male creature, he wondered at the sharpness of her speech while he liked it. 'I have no opinion on the question in general; I have only a feeling as to particular instances. I have met a few women that write, and I had rather not meet them again: that's all.'

Then there began to flow in the mind of each a current of speculation and desire beneath the matters to which they were apparently giving their attention and of which they were talking. 'Here,' thought Ainsworth, 'is the pleasantest, sweetest, most delightful comrade a man could have—pleasanter, sweeter far than any male comrade; and yet, I suppose I must be cut off from her society except on certain precise and formal occasions when I may meet her in a company! I cannot ask her to drop in and see me; and she cannot—even if she wishes it—ask me to drop in and see her. Mrs Grundy and propriety forbid it, because she is a lone woman and I am a lone man!' At the same time Isabel was thinking that she had not known Ainsworth quite so frankly and buoyantly boyish before. Was it the sense of being in a wilderness of men and women who did not care one jot for his existence that gave him that touch of naïve, irresponsible youthfulness? However it was, she liked his buoyancy and his boyishness, and she said to herself: 'How he would delight in my father!—and how my father would delight in him! How much good they might do each other! How stimulating each might be to the other! And yet I cannot bring them together! Can I? Can I not? Why not? Why not, indeed? Am I ashamed of my father? Do I propose to keep him always hidden? And if I do not, why should I not show him at once, at least to Mr Ainsworth, who, I am sure, will neither misunderstand him nor me?' It is a very subtle and seductive experience that—the sure and certain feeling—which is more frequently based on intuition and understanding than on reason and knowledge—that there is one person who will never misunderstand or mistake you whatever you may say or do: it is very closely akin to a fuller experience which Isabel had as yet no notion she was beginning to undergo.

Isabel, as we have seen, was a young lady who, when she had decided that a course was right, did not review and re-review her decision, and thus postpone action till the ebb of feeling.

'Mr Ainsworth,' said she, 'have you ever heard me speak of my father?'

'Your father!' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'I did

not know you had a father! I mean, of course, that I had always supposed he was dead.'

'He has been virtually dead for many years—dead to me and to my aunt and uncles since I was a baby. Some other time I will tell you all about it. "He was dead, but is alive again," she said, quoting but half-consciously the sacred words; "he was lost, and is found." Yesterday I found him; I am just come from him now; and I am going to bring him to live with me—without, for the present, telling my uncles or my aunt anything about it.'

'It is very noble, and beautiful, and filial of you!' said Ainsworth.

'No, no,' said she; 'it is not. Don't use such absurd adjectives. I am merely doing it because I like to do it.'

'But,' said he, 'though it is not for me to question what you propose to do, may I suggest that you may not have considered all the trouble and—and distress that it may entail?'

'I have considered all that,' said she. 'I know what you are thinking of. But he is not a bad man, or a gross man. He is a clever, gentle creature—my poor father!—simple, weak, and docile as can be. You remember Coleridge and his besetting weakness? Well, my father is something like Coleridge. The habit that has ruined him is the same, and his cleverness is of the same kind too. He is coming to me to-morrow, and I want to ask you to do me a favour: come and see him sometimes, and talk to him. He is very interesting, I think: he used to be an editor, and he writes still a little, and he and you may find each other good company; at anyrate, I am sure it will cheer and encourage him to find a young man interested in him.'

'My dear Miss Raynor,' said Ainsworth—and in his impulsive fervour he had to put a restraint on himself not to seize and press Isabel's hand: he grasped and pressed his own instead—'whatever I can do, I will do; but do not use the word favour in connection with it. It will be a precious privilege to please you, and to do anything for your father.'

'Thank you,' said she simply: his fervour made her somewhat shy. 'I am hoping,' she continued, 'to cure him gradually of his habit.'

'You will,' exclaimed Ainsworth in the fullest belief—'you will!'

'And, of course,' said she, 'you understand that all this is for the present a secret.'

'I understand,' said he. 'And—and I appreciate your having taken me into your confidence.'

'This,' said she, stopping at a little gate—the number of which Ainsworth eagerly noted—'is where I lodge. Good-bye.'

She gave him her hand and smiled frankly on him, so that he was penetrated through and through with delight. He looked back after he had turned away, and at the same instant she glanced over her shoulder. She smiled and nodded to him, and he raised his hat and went on, ravished with her charm. Never, he thought, had there been so spirited a poise of head and neck as that she showed when she turned; never, certainly, had he seen so divine and enthralling a smile—a smile that had been all for him!—and never, surely, had there been in all the world a kinder, sweeter, more fascinating, or more beau-

tiful woman than she! The red gold of sunset was glowing behind him as he walked away, and he murmured to himself:

'Rosy is the West, rosy is the South;
Roses are her cheeks, and a rose her mouth!'

HOW THEY TELEGRAPH.

SEVERAL years' practice as a telegraphist in Her Majesty's Post-office so fixes the telegraphic code in the mind that the manipulating of the various instruments becomes almost mechanical, and their signals, to the stranger so mysterious, are as intelligible to the operator as the words of an ordinary conversation. I well remember, however, that for a considerable time after I entered the 'service' the 'spirit-rappings' of the bells and sounders were so much jargon to my understanding, and certainly irritating and confusing to my ears. It takes some time to become acquainted with the different kinds of instruments, and long uninterrupted practice before they can be operated with ease and rapidity. When you enter the service as a telegraph learner, you are kindly presented with a card which contains a faithful representation of the English alphabet as you were taught it at school, with the addition of a number of mysterious dots and dashes, which you are given to understand are the telegraphic signs for the letters; but if these are supposed to be shorter than the letters themselves, you are inclined to think that it is on the principle of the old woman's ideas of brevity, who had a son named John, but 'they called him Johnny for short.' The alphabet card of signs is like the following:

A ..	N ..	1
B	O ---	2
C	P	3
D ...	Q ----	4
E .	R ...	5
F	S ...	6
G	T -	7
H	U ...	8
I ..	V ---	9
J ----	W ---	0
K	X ----
L	Y ----	
M --	Z ----	

You are to commence to fix these signs on your memory, and for this purpose are allowed to practise them on a 'dummy' instrument, with two keys like two escaped piano keys, that have widened themselves, and flattened themselves, and blackened themselves in the process of escaping from their legitimate sphere.

You quickly learn that all the dot signals are to be struck with the left key, and all the dash signals with the right. Therefore, the letter E is represented by one stroke of the left key; the letter T by one stroke of the right; while A is a combination of the two. Three taps on the left mean S, while three on the right mean O, and so on. Learning this alphabet is a slow business at first, and the learner generally makes it about ten times more laborious than is necessary by pressing down the keys as though he were playing on them with his feet, or by working them in jerks as though his arms were afflicted with spasms.

The alphabet is gone over again and again and again until facility is acquired. When I was learning, the dots and dashes haunted me all day long, and through the night they disturbed my sleep. Whenever my hands were at liberty, they were tapping away for very life. Was I at the dinner-table waiting to be served? my knife and fork became the two 'keys.' Was I seated in the arm-chair? the left arm became a 'dot,' the right one a 'dash,' and I gradually made the polish fade by the interminable messages I signalled on that old arm-chair. The keys of the piano afforded a splendid method of practice of an evening, and though a tune on two notes is liable to become somewhat monotonous when repeated for the thousandth time, yet it could be varied, you know, by selecting two different keys about every half-hour. Needless to say the family became highly educated in classical music, and were supremely delighted with my performance: at the same time it is but honest to add that they wished it were a harmonium instead of a piano, as then I could have pursued my studies in silence, unless, indeed, I were so stupid as to 'signal' on the pedals with my feet as well as on the keys with my fingers.

When you have learned to tickle the keys in this way, you have by no means finished. You may then be able to *send* a message fairly well, but unless you can *receive* the signals also, you are no good in a telegraph room. Now, receiving a message is an altogether different matter. You may have to take it from a Needle, or from a Bell, or from a Sounder, or from a Morse, and hence you have to learn *four* different methods of speaking, or hearing, the same language.

The Needle instrument possesses a dial the size of a mantel-clock face, in the centre of which is suspended a piece of metal, tapering at each end, and technically called a 'needle.' As the message is signalled to you by some fellow playing on the keys at the distant station in the way that has been named, the needle swings from side to side between two ivory pegs—perhaps they are bone—and you have got to transpose these swinging motions into an intelligible message, it may be either describing a dog-fight or a wedding; it may be ordering oysters for supper or sending somebody to Timbuctoo. When the needle swings to the left, you are to understand it means a 'dot;' when it swings to the right, a 'dash' is indicated; so that your alphabet is then read by *sight* instead of by touch, and when a quick operator is working the instrument, the 'waggles' of the needle are decidedly hysterical, and, to a stranger, utterly incomprehensible.

The learner generally takes the needle instrument first; and I have not yet forgotten—though then but a mere boy—the pride with which I succeeded in reading my first message without assistance, and if I did ask a man to 'send the corn in his own *socks*,' I detected it in time to save myself from getting the *sack*. To make myself complete master of this instrument, I remember I procured a Hudson's dry soap-box, chiselled out a circular piece near the top, and filled up the cavity with a cardboard disc, in the centre of which I pivoted a needle made of tin. I ran a sort of axle from the needle to the back of the box, and on this fixed a crosspiece, attaching to each end of it a bit of elastic; and

these in turn to two wooden keys, which I had persuaded—by some contrivance I now forget, but which at the time I thought highly ingenious—to spring up and down at a touch; and although their motions were something akin to those of the celebrated Spring-heeled Jack, yet it served my purpose, and enabled me to 'telegraph' to my heart's content, at the fireside at home, all kinds of imaginary messages to the four corners of the earth. Had I had to pay for them at a shilling apiece, which was the rate at that time, the fortune of the Inland Revenue would have been made, and the necessity of taxation abolished for all time.

The Bell instrument is to be read by the *ear*. Two little hammers—one on the left, and the other on the right—tap a small metal plate as the distant keys are played, and the message is conveyed by not altogether unmusical sounds; one stroke of the bell on the left meaning E, while one stroke of the bell on the right indicates T. The incessant tapping of these bells in a busy office is another thing to which the embryo telegraphist has to become accustomed; while, when a score of such instruments are clicking at once, one can easily understand that the noise resembles that made in a small factory. Sometimes it is so great that the clerk is glad to stick his head between the bells, so that the hammers are close to his left and right ear respectively, while his writing pad is almost under his nose, and he is straining every nerve to keep up with the terrific operator at the other end, for an expert telegraphist can wire a message at a very high speed on a Bell instrument. In rough and windy weather, several wires running in the same direction will clash together, and then, oh, the utter jargon, the vexatious, irritating sounds that these bells give forth! They are instantly put out of tune and temper, as may easily be imagined, when several messages, instead of minding their own business, and running respectably along their own wires, are chumming together on one line, and dancing a jig or singing *Auld Lang Syne* with crossed hands.

The next instrument to be acquired may be the Sounder, and here the learner has almost to begin over again, for, instead of having two keys on which to play his little tunes, he is provided with only one. He is told that to signal a dot he must touch the key very lightly, and to denote a dash a little more heavily. Hence, the same code of signals is available, for a light tap indicates E, while a more decided one signifies T. Three light strokes mean S, while three heavy ones cry O! Of course, facility in the use of this key is only attained after a considerable amount of practice, but, once secured, the operator rattles away without a thought, and makes his light and heavy signals with as much ease as an expert phonographer does the light and heavy strokes of shorthand. To receive a message on the Sounder, the ear requires to be trained to the same thing—that is to say, it must at once detect between light and heavy sounds, for the rapid strokes made by the vertical motion of a small brass rod are the only signals he receives. A light sound says E; a heavy one means T; and when a 'demon' sender is at the other end of the line, your reporter, in trying to keep up with a rapid speaker, is 'not in it,' for,

in telegraphy, every word has to be written out at full length in longhand, and the operator has to listen to his oracle amid the click and clatter of a score of other vociferous jabbering machines.

Then there is the Morse instrument, which is perhaps the prettiest of all, for, while you send your message with one key precisely in the same way as in the case of the Sounder, in receiving a message you have it actually written out for you in black and white—no, not black and white, but black and blue (perhaps it is black and blue through being struck so much). A narrow ribbon of blue paper unwinds itself from the instrument, and by an ingenious yet simple arrangement the signals from the small brass rod, instead of having to be read by sound, are made to mark themselves by printers' ink on to the ribbon; and the telegraphist, seated at the desk, holds one end of the ribbon in his left hand, and by practice draws it gradually along before his eyes, at the same time rapidly reading the dots and dashes, and translating them into 'good old English,' for the benefit of the individual to whom the familiar pink form is to be directed. Thus the dots and dashes of the learner's card are here reproduced by the faithful Morse, and simply require translating into longhand.

It is easy to understand that the addition or omission of a single dot or dash could very soon alter the whole tenor of a message, and the clerk not only requires to read his message correctly as from the signals, but also with intelligence, so as to avoid sense being converted into nonsense. Nevertheless, mistakes do occasionally escape detection; yet, when a word may be so easily altered, it is remarkable that so few blunders do occur, for ----, which means 'bad,' could be easily turned into 'dead,' thus: ----, and consequently the message, 'Your Uncle John is bad,' being received as 'Your Uncle John is dead,' is not at all surprising. 'We got the twins this morning' (----), would not have been so alarming if the telegraphist had signified that they had received 'twigs' (----). The man who ordered his 'cap' (----) to meet him at the station, was enraged when he found his trap (----) was not in waiting. While the other man who sent for his 'pig' (----) was fortunately understood to mean his 'gig' (----).

When the telegraph learner has mastered the Morse instrument, he is surprised to find that a message can be sent and received on it at one and the same time on the same wire—that is to say, a telegram may be travelling from London to Brighton, and another, of a totally different nature, from Brighton to London, on the self-same wire, yet with no clashing or intermingling. When this is done it is termed duplex working; but quadruplex is still more amazing, for four messages can be flashing along the same wire at the same instant without interfering with each other in the least.

Then there is the Wheatstone instrument to become acquainted with. Here, again, something new has to be learned, for three keys confront the operator, and they are manipulated, not by pressure, but by striking them with a small rubber-tipped mallet or punch. The three keys are like typewriter keys, but with rather larger

surfaces, and these are struck merely to prepare the message for transmission. The left key signifies a dot, and the right one a dash, but the middle key must be invariably struck after each letter, just as a typist strikes the space bar after each word. A white paper ribbon passes through this instrument behind the keys, and as they are manipulated, they perforate small holes in the ribbon, until, when the message is finished, the white spotless paper is found to be crowded with hundreds of thousands of tiny holes. But the message has not yet left the office. To send it to its destination the white ribbon thus prepared must be placed in an instrument called a Wheatstone Transmitter. Here it rushes between two small brass rollers at a speed which can be regulated from fifty to four hundred words per minute (where are ye, brave stenographers?), and, strange to say, at the distant station a paper ribbon comes out of their instrument at an equally high rate of speed, but with all the signals converted into the familiar dots and dashes again, as in the Morse instrument just named. The Wheatstone instruments, which are capable of working at such a high speed, are generally used for press messages, long speeches of several columns in length being flashed all over the country, in many cases to half-a-dozen widely separated towns at once, at a rate very much faster than that at which they were uttered; so that it is possible, by the reporter sending the transcript of his notes of the first part of a speech immediately to the telegraph office, to have it pouring into the editor's room at a newspaper office hundreds of miles away before the speaker has finished his address, and the first portion of his speech may be actually set up in type before he has concluded his remarks. The speech, perforated on the ribbon in the way named, may be rapidly despatched to half-a-dozen towns by means of one Wheatstone instrument; and then the same ribbon, without further preparation, may be placed in another Wheatstone, connected with a different group of towns, and signalled to them with equal facility. Thus the Queen's Speech or any other item of public importance is flashed to all parts of the kingdom within a few minutes of being made known.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

MR. LANGLAND, of Langland Manor, was not so young as he had been. To many, that may sound a ridiculous truism; but to others, who know that in sentiment and hope, in all that gives value to youth, a man is often younger at five-and-forty than he was at five-and-twenty, it will not appear absurd. At a certain spring-time Mr Langland was at least thirty years older than he had been ten years before. One morning in particular, as he tramped steadily along the narrow footpath over the swelling expanse of arable that crowned his estate, he looked as if he were about done with life altogether, as if he expected nothing more in this world, and were extremely uncertain whether there were another. When he had surmounted the rise of the ground, he stopped and looked about him, tapped his

gaiter with his stick, as in the sharp impatience of pain, bit his lip hard—there seemed a sob swelling in his throat—threw out nods around him, as if he were counting the points of the compass, and finally let his head sink, as in the utter perplexity of despair.

All that was observed by a man on the other side of the hedge close by, who stroked a very thin Roman nose with a white and lean forefinger, and raised and dropped his gray bushy eyebrows, as if he would say: 'Ah, that's how he feels about it! Well, now, let me see.' With the impressive 'Hem!' of an unctuous preacher, he pushed aside the straggling, overgrown tops of the hedge and sidled through a gap. The Squire turned quickly, and a new shade passed upon his afflicted face, as of suspicion and dislike, when he saw the man.

'Mr Purvey,' he murmured, not at all by way of greeting, but in a tone of assent to a disagreeable fact. Then, as if recollecting his manners, he added: 'Good-morning.'

'Good-morning, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey. 'A sweet morning—is it not? "He maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good."'

'Yes,' growled the Squire in assent. He looked sideways, as if he suspected there was a personal reference in the quotation, and let his look linger a moment up and down the half-clerical garb of Mr Purvey—his black coat and his white shirt front and neckcloth. "And," continued the Squire, "sendeth His rain upon the just and upon the unjust."

'Quite so,' said Mr Purvey, smiling approval. 'This now'—and he turned round and indicated with his stick the neglected, rain-swept furrows, among which couch-grass and weeds and thistles ran riot—and that—pointing down at a rich bottom dotted with sheep and lambs—'are illustrations of the way His blessings and His chastisements are received by the two kinds of people. This land turns sour and unproductive and wild with such weather as it does not like; that green bottom is grateful for all weathers, and turns all to advantage and profit.'

'You're too fine and—and figurative for me,' said the Squire with a touch of bitterness in his tone. 'All I know is that that bottom and this upland arable, both o' them, like best what's best for them—a mixture of rain and shine. The bottom, of course, thrives best with more wet than shine; and this arable with more shine than wet. This field, sir, that used to be the finest sight the parish could show, with its straight furrows of rich, sweet loam spread out to sun and shower, has been having for years more wet than human clay can endure, and so it is as you see it—lying—er—fallow, sir.'

'So like the worldly man!' said Mr Purvey, extending his hand and speaking with a roll of rhetorical complacency.

'Eh?' said the Squire with a sudden turn.

'I mean this fallow field'—with an emphasis on 'fallow.'—The Squire looked ruefully round on the land, which now needed all an auctioneer's imagination to pass it off as 'arable.'—'That bottom,' continued Mr Purvey, 'takes the reverses that have made this field so fallow and turns them to the richest uses.'

'You are talking nonsense, Mr Purvey. Excuse me. But that bottom likes all the wet we've

been having as little as this field, though it does not show it so much on the outside. That bottom is as sodden as a sponge; it's sour and rotten, and those sheep on it have, every one of them, got foot-rot.'

'Ah, well,' said Mr Purvey; 'I didn't know that.'

'Of course you didn't. How should you?'

The Squire looked conscious of having the best of what argument there had been.

Mr Purvey considered him, and suddenly facing him, said: 'Well, I hope—indeed, I think—this fine day'—looking up and around—'is promise of a better season for us. Let us have faith, at anyrate. And if you will kindly look in upon me this afternoon, I daresay we shall be able to arrange this business of ours to the satisfaction of both of us.'

Mr Purvey held out his hand. The Squire took it and looked at him in brightening surprise: he felt as if suddenly ushered from the gloom and closeness of a small room into the open fresh air.

'About three,' said Mr Purvey. 'Will that do?'

'Very well,' said the Squire, becoming very red, and giving Mr Purvey's hand a grip which made his eyelids tremble. 'I'm obliged to you, Mr Purvey.'

'Not at all,' said Mr Purvey; 'by no means.'

So they parted. Mr Purvey turned off along the cart-track to the left, while the Squire continued on the path he had been pursuing before his conversation with Purvey. The Squire swung along at a sharp pace for a few yards, and then he suddenly drew up, and looked after the black, spare figure with its hands crossed behind, as if to keep them from doing harm. Could it be that Purvey meant mischief? The benevolent intention he seemed to have towards the Squire's distress was not at all in keeping with what the Squire and the Squire's neighbours had judged to be his character.

Let me explain.

Purvey—whose name is celebrated to all the world by 'Purvey's Patent Food for Infants and Invalids'—was a man of sixty or so, who had dwelt, at intervals, on the confines of the Langland property for three years. He had bought a pleasant little freehold farm of one hundred acres, which the auctioneers had advertised in the London papers as 'a charming residential estate'; he had pulled down the old farmhouse, and built himself, on the top of the hill, where it could not be hid, a gaunt abomination of a villa in concrete, which everybody either laughed or shuddered at. That first unfavourable impression of himself he deepened by opposing the very High, but the very popular, vicar of the parish, and intensified by holding 'Revival Services' in a galvanised iron Mission Room which he had reared on his own property. His black coat, his glib tongue, and his familiar address, and most of all his reputation for vast wealth, drew aside even the elect of the rustics. Yet, notwithstanding these differences, Purvey had been early received as a casual visitor at Langland Manor. His little property 'marched' with Mr Langland's, and he would walk over to the Manor House to discuss with the easy Squire questions of common fences and ditches, saying: 'Don't

you trouble about the cost. You've enough to do, I know, in these bad times, without putting up new fences. But new fences, you see, are a hobby with me, and I may as well spend a few pounds on them as on anything else.' Moreover, Mrs Langland, a gentle, religious soul, came to like a talk with Mr Purvey: his evangelical conversation did her good, she said; and her husband was not the man to say her 'nay' in anything. Then the good lady fell ill, and during her illness Mr Purvey sent her supplies of his Patent Food. It was not a great matter, but the Squire took it as kindly meant: it won his heart more than a greater service would have done. But soon the greater service came also, such a service as must either bind one man closely to another, or totally disserve them.

Mrs Langland died; and on her death the Squire—for reasons we need not trouble about here—found himself in greater difficulties than even bad seasons and vacant farms could be responsible for. Somehow, Mr Purvey got wind of these difficulties, and offered to buy the Fairfield Farm—that on which we have just seen the pair—which ran with his own little estate, and which probably was desirable in his eyes for other reasons. Then the Squire had to explain that he could not sell the Fairfield Farm, because, in law, it was not his: it had belonged to his wife, and the right to it was transmitted to his eldest daughter, Kitty. Upon that Mr Purvey offered to lend the Squire, with his daughter's consent, six thousand pounds on a mortgage of the farm; and the Squire had eagerly accepted the offer.

The mortgage had been effected two years before the date I am writing of, but the Squire had no prospect of redeeming it; no, nor even of paying the interest, in connection with which was a circumstance that made him angry, when he thought of it. At the end of the first year, Purvey had said, when the £240 of interest was almost due: 'About that mortgage, Mr Langland—you've had scarcely time to turn round yet: suppose we let both mortgage and interest slide until next year.' And the Squire had foolishly let the matter slide, and now there was a sum of about £480 due for interest alone! He was dejected, desperate, and suspicious—suspicious that Mr Purvey had led him into a trap. And he was the more angrily inclined to suspicion, that during the past year Purvey had taken several opportunities of letting him know he had a very promising son of a marriageable age. What! a family alliance with 'Purvey's Patent Food for Infants and Invalids?' The vulgar, money-grubbing, hypocritical son of a vulgar, money-grubbing, hypocritical father marry his Kitty? It may be called *a priori* prejudice, but the Squire sincerely believed that the son must deserve these epithets as much as he believed the father deserved them; and he resolved that his Kitty's feelings should not be outraged by such an alliance, though the heavens should fall. And the Squire's heaven seemed very likely to fall; for he had no prospect of paying either mortgage or its accumulated interest, and Purvey, if offended, might foreclose.

'Now, what does he mean?' thought the Squire, as he looked after Purvey. "If you will kindly look in this afternoon—I daresay we can arrange

this business—to the satisfaction of both of us?"

'To the satisfaction of both of us:' these were certainly Purvey's words; and Mr Langland as he trudged home kept repeating them to himself—drawing them out, as it were, like an ear-trumpet, and hearing Purvey's voice through them; or like a spy-glass, and seeing Purvey's black back and crossed hands through them.

It began to rain before he reached home; but yet he went to the Home Farm and tramped about the out-buildings, absently looking at and feeling cows and pigs, while he dreamed of what he might do if 'the agricultural depression' would only lift, if the heavens would only be propitious, and cease their persecution of him and his with rain and murrain. And if—oh, if!—he had only a little more capital, what oats and barley would he not raise on that fine upland, what pork would he not breed from his favourite cross of Prince Albert and Berkshire! He felt at the moment as if he could submit to any terms from Purvey to be freed from that chain and clog of pecuniary trouble which he had so long dragged about with him. But when he went indoors and bethought him how cheerful and patient his girls had been under the abridgment of their small luxuries—and under even the reduction of the household—when he saw his bright, beautiful eldest daughter, Kitty, standing in the pantry shelling peas, with her sleeves turned up from her white arms, and with a big white apron before her—he swore a big oath, which relieved him considerably, that never—come what would—would he permit his girl to be saddened and degraded by an unbecoming alliance!

At three o'clock, Langland and Purvey sat facing each other in what was called the library of the concrete villa. Purvey moved a paper or two about, took up an old quill, and began to mend and dress it, and said: 'Well, Mr Langland—he had not arrived at the familiarity of dropping the 'mister'—'what about this mortgage? I need not remind you that you have already had the legal notice, and that I can demand repayment this day week.'

'I know you can,' said the Squire, with his hand firmly closed on the head of his stick.

'Well, now, what about it? Am I right, for instance, in guessing—merely, a suspicion, a guess, you know—that you are not prepared, that you do not expect to be prepared, to redeem it next week?'

'You are right, Mr Purvey,' said the Squire. 'I am not prepared yet, nor do I expect to be prepared in a week, to redeem.'

'When do you expect to be prepared, Mr Langland?' asked Purvey with a sidelong look.

'Pon my soul, Mr Purvey, I don't know!' exclaimed the Squire. 'I don't even see any way of paying you the two years' interest. I can manage one with a pinch, but the two!'—He shook his head.—'I thought, Mr Purvey, that we might come to some—some arrangement.'

'Well,' said Mr Purvey, laying down the mended quill and taking up another, 'the fact is, Mr Langland, that I ought not to leave the money out any longer. I can apply it in my business; and to be strictly business-like—as one must be in these days—I ought to put it into the

business, where it will make its fifteen per cent. instead of four.'

The Squire's heart sank. He saw hope slipping far out of his reach; he imagined Purvey already in possession of Fairfield Farm—of Kitty's inheritance!—and he was conscious of a difficulty of utterance.

'Is that an alternative you present to me, Mr Purvey?' at last he said—'to pay fifteen per cent.? Nine hundred pounds of interest every year? I couldn't do it! It is completely beyond my power!'

'I have not asked that you should, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey, with a fiercely genial smile. 'I have only suggested that the money *could* be so applied both to the benefit of the business and of myself: a good business man would so apply it; but I am not a good business man: I have other interests besides business; and I do not propose to withdraw it from you and apply it to the business. That is not my alternative. But I *have* an alternative.' Mr Purvey in mending the pen in his hand split it right up and rendered it useless. He threw it away, and clasping his hands on the table, leaned forward, and looked at the Squire. 'I *have* an alternative,' he repeated.

'May I beg to know,' said the Squire, in an agitation which he could ill conceal, 'what it is?'

'I have a son, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey; 'he is a worthy young man, sir—an excellent young man, though I doubt whether his feet are yet set in the way of the Kingdom. You have a daughter, Mr Langland—a dear girl, a sweet girl, a girl with a gentle and gracious disposition, though it may be she also is still unregenerate.'

('Confound his impudence!' thought the Squire.) 'Will it not be wise, Mr Purvey,' he said aloud, 'to let these questions of religion alone? We may not agree upon them.'

Mr Purvey smiled, and opened his hands with a gentle deprecatory wave.

'Your daughter and my son, Mr Langland, might find grace together. My son, with the fortune he will inherit, might reasonably hope to make a better match—from a worldly point of view, I mean,' he added hurriedly; for an ominous frown and an involuntary flush had appeared on the Squire's face. 'But I had rather, Mr Langland, he married your daughter, Miss Kitty, without a penny, than another girl with fifty thousand pounds. If you can see your way to that, Mr Langland, then the mortgage may run till Doomsday—whenever that may be—at one and a half per cent.' And he smiled pleasantly and cracked his fingers, as if he had made a joke of a very agreeable kind.

'You flatter me—and my daughter,' said the Squire, pulling his beard roughly, to subdue or disguise the look of indignation and ferocity which he was sure must be upon his face. 'But,' he continued, 'you forget, Mr Purvey, that neither I nor my daughter has ever seen your son.'

'You will soon, however, have an opportunity of seeing him. He has been abroad for several years. He is a—— Well, yes,' said Purvey mysteriously, when apparently he was on the point of declaring the occupation or profession

of his son, 'he is as clever a fellow as you'll meet with in a day's journey, Mr Langland. I have written for him to get leave of absence and to come home, and I expect to have him here in three months or so. Then you shall see him, Mr Langland.'

'You will understand, then,' said the Squire, quick to perceive that he might escape from his position with temper and dignity, 'that I can say nothing about the matter you have proposed to me until we have made the acquaintance of your son. You would not have me engage my daughter to—er—a man she has never seen?'

'Certainly not, Mr Langland—certainly not. They shall meet, and they are sure to like each other,' said he, stroking his thin Roman nose in the best of spirits.

A few minutes later the Squire was outside the concrete villa, angry and fuming. To subdue his discomposure, he thought he would take a roundabout way home over the breezy upland. To that end he turned across Mr Purvey's fields to reach the Fairfield Farm. He was but a few yards from the margin of the Purvey property when he came upon a square enclosure of high, close-set boards. He was wondering what that could be, when a man came out of a door in the enclosure, and through the open door he saw that there was a little wooden shanty within.

'What's this for?' he asked of the man, who was an utter stranger, and who looked grimy and oily, as if he had been attending to machinery. 'I haven't noticed this building before.'

'Boring, sir,' answered the man, somewhat curtly and sulkily.

'Boring, eh? Boring for water, I suppose?'

'Yes, sir—boring,' repeated the man, and passed on.

The Squire gave a passing glance of surprise to the fact that he had heard nothing of such an operation being in progress, and then he cast all his thought and attention on his own affairs.

SOME NOTES ON BONNETS.

MALE headgear has often been taken as a theme, and numberless dissertations have been written upon the beauties, advantages, and shortcomings of the 'stove-pipe' and the 'billycock;' but very few appear to have given much attention to the philosophy of Bonnets, or studied the growth and gradual development of those combinations of birds, ribbons, flowers, and feathers which now grace the heads of our fair ones. The male hat has been rendered famous by Lamb and Leigh Hunt, while Carlyle's caustic criticism upon dress generally will always remain unique in English literature. 'Clothes,' he says, 'gave us individuality, distinction, social polity; clothes have made men of us; they are threatening to make clothes-screens of us.' Indeed, in the present day it would seem as if the prophecy of Herr Teufelsdröckh bids fair to be fulfilled. 'One might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion,' to quote an old adage; and it is interesting to glance back and observe the multifarious twists and turns, alterations and additions, which have marked the history of bonnets.

'The fashion wears out more apparel than the

man,' says Shakespeare, and we have not far to seek to ascertain the abundance of this truth. But in this paper it is not our purpose to deal with the vagaries of the head-coverings of man, for wherever fashion is concerned he is but an insignificant cipher, and the sober 'silk hat' to which he so tenaciously clings is of slight consequence in comparison with the fearful and wonderful arrangement of nodding plumes and bobbing flowers which adorns the female head in this nineteenth century.

The earliest headgear of the ladies of Britain was a felt or woollen cap called *haet* (hence our modern word hat), worn by the higher class of Anglo-Saxons; but this was quickly superseded by a hood or veil, which, falling down before, was wrapped round the neck and breast in a very inartistic manner. But not only do we owe the introduction of head-coverings to the Saxons, but in that period the ladies all used on their cheeks a red cosmetic, so that the calling in of art, in the shape of carmine and powder, to assist Nature is not the outcome of refinement, but the preservation of an ancient custom.

During the Danish and Norman periods, the head-dress altered but little in style, and it was not until the thirteenth century that the veils were of gold tissue or superbly embroidered silk, and over them were worn diadems, circlets, and garlands; whilst the wimple covered the head and shoulders, and was fastened under the chin, giving a decidedly ugly appearance. It was in this century, too, corsets were first introduced and worn over the dress.

In the reign of Edward III. hats first became general, and were constructed to resemble a coronet; but with the accession of Richard II. these were discarded; party-coloured hoods came into vogue, and Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales* describes the carpenter's wife as wearing a silk girdle, head fillet, and brooch. When the sumptuary laws were revived by Henry V., ladies adopted the expedient of covering their head-dress with a kerchief or veil, and this continued throughout the whole of the fifteenth century. Besides the heart-shaped head-dress and the Turkish turban, ladies now wore upon their heads the ugly steeple, consisting of a roll of linen covered with fine lawn, which hung to the ground or was tucked under the arm. To such an extent was this fashion carried, that it is related of Isabella of Bavaria, queen of Charles VI., that she had the doors of the palace of Vincennes altered so as to admit herself and the ladies of the court in full regalia. Caps with large wings or lappets on each side, similar to those now worn by the Normandy peasants, were also much affected at this period, and were called *bonets*, hence our word bonnet.

The novelty of the later part of the fifteenth century appears from the old chronicles to have been a curious head-dress of embroidered gold-net projecting from the back of the head, and a stiffened kerchief over it spreading out like wings, a fashion which was quickly followed by close caps and caul, from under which the hair hung down to the waist. Elaboration seems to have commenced with the reign of Henry VIII., for head-dresses were now made of velvet, having long ear-pieces reaching down to the shoulders, and studded with pearls, jewels, and gold. Three-cornered caps of

miniver were also worn, as well as closely fitting caps reaching to the ears, known as the 'Mary-Queen-of-Scots' cap. The forms of the Elizabethan head-dress, we learn from Holinshed, were very numerous, consisting of French hoods, hats, caps, kerchiefs, caul, of net, wire, and lattice caps, as well as the ermine bonnet, the latter of which was 'forbidden to all but gentlewomen born, having arms.'

The French cap remained in fashion until the time of William III., then with the rage for false hair came the periwig; and the cap gave place to the high-crowned hat with ostrich or peacock feathers, and a sprig of yew for mourning. As the wig became the mode in the Georgian era, so did the shapes and styles of caps and hats change almost as rapidly as at the present day. Caps were at first small frilled or puffed; then came the Ranelagh mob-cap, copied from the head-kerchiefs of market-women; the Mary-Queen-of-Scots cap of black gauze edged with French beads; the fly-cap, like a butterfly, edged with garnets, topazes, or brilliants; and Goldsmith's 'Cousin Hannah's' cap, a few bits of cambric and flowers of painted paper stuck on one side of the head. Next calashes, like the head of a cabriolet, were appended to the head-dress. Following this came a flat straw or silk hat of small size, trimmed with ribbons, and worn upon the crown of the head; and afterwards a large round gypsy straw hat fastened by ribbons under the chin.

The bonnet—a century before, made of silk, velvet, or cloth—was in the time of the Georges changed to straw, for, about 1724, Gay mentions 'a new straw bonnet lined with green.' The formalities of the eighteenth century received a terrible blow by the French Revolution, and in the ten years preceding 1800, a complete change was effected in feminine head-dress. Periwigs commenced to die out; but straw bonnets, much modified, and broad-brimmed hats, trimmed with long ostrich feathers, were the mode throughout the previous half of the present century. Then came the rage for quickly changing fashion: hats and bonnets altered yearly; and in the last four decades we have had ladies wearing head-gear of all conceivable shapes and sizes. There was the straw hat like an inverted saucer, and the tiny flat bonnet perched upon the high chignon after the fashion of Katharine's cap in the play:

Moulded on a porringer.
Why, 'tis a cockle, or a walnut shell,
A knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap,
A custard coffin, a bauble.

They have been multiform. There was the basket hat, the turban, the flower bonnet, the becoming 'Princess,' the saucy 'Gainsborough,' the 'poke' bonnet with its hideous pea-green strings, and hundreds, nay thousands, of others, that have been in vogue for a brief space, but have now 'had their day,' and been relegated to that oblivion, the capacious sack of the dealer in ladies' wardrobes.

Since the commencement of the fifteenth century, the fantasies of head-dress have been borrowed from Paris, and the *haut monde* of that city has guided the English taste exclusively, until at the present moment everything that is fashionable is French.

Fashion, however, is much more fickle nowa-

days than it was in the earlier half of the century; for whereas at that time a bonnet would be in fashion for a decade or so, and daughters frequently wore their mother's wedding dresses, in these later years the Rue de la Paix asserts its influence to cause an alteration of shapes several times each season. Both from the Parisian milliner's point of view and that of the leaders of Society, these kaleidoscopic changes are highly necessary for the reservation of style to the aristocracy. In these levelling days, as soon as a new 'model' of a hat or bonnet is introduced, the milliners of the unfashionable at once proceed to copy it, with the result that within a month or so of its appearance in Regent Street shop windows, it is worn by the denizens of the Mile End Road when upon their Sunday excursions.

Heavily as these continual changes of fashion may draw upon the purse of the humble and long-suffering husband, nevertheless they are necessary so long as it is the mission of woman to outvie her neighbour in the matter of dress. Materials in the last century were so expensive as to preclude the poor from imitating the rich; but all this has changed in this age of cheapness. Whether the present styles are more becoming than the Gainsborough of our grandmothers or the coal-scuttle of Madame Sarah Gamp, it is not our intention to dispute, it being merely a matter of taste; although we cannot refrain from asserting that many of the hats and bonnets of to-day have been brought to artistic perfection. Their lofty construction may perhaps have annoyed us when vainly endeavouring to obtain a glimpse of the performers at matinées, concerts, and other such gatherings; but fashion delights in extremes, and it is therefore satisfactory to note that they are now worn quite as low as a year ago they were high.

The bonnet is as dear to the feminine heart as the pipe to the man, with the exception that the former is most attractive when new, whilst the latter is rendered more appreciable by age; and this being so, we should neither sneer at what some are pleased to term the fickleness of the fair sex, nor begrudge them their little foibles, expensive though they may be.

SOME HOSPITAL STORIES.

By G. B. BURGIN.

'You don't know Miss X——?'

'Never heard of her.'

'Oh, well, I'm sorry for you. But if you are interested in hospital life in a big city and the things which happen to nurses, you couldn't do better than call on Miss X——. I'll give you a letter of introduction to her. She has devoted most of her life to philanthropic objects, especially in connection with the London poor. Miss X—— will give you more information in five minutes than the average nurse could provide you with in a week. Better go and see her.'

I took my friend's advice, and a letter of introduction, and called upon Miss X—— at eleven one chilly November morning. Miss X——, having comforted a poor woman who complained of suffering from 'nervous nobility,' sent her away, and seeing that I was cold, proceeded to make me some delicious coffee over a

little spirit lamp in one corner of her pleasant morning-room. The room itself was gay with many-hued chrysanthemums, with pretty bits of old china, and quaint Japanese hangings. Behind the curtains were lint bandages, stores of necessaries, &c.; but I only became aware of these when something was wanted in a hurry and the curtains were withdrawn. When Miss X—— had disposed of another visitor whose complaint was 'Father's been took bad agin,' she sat down in a comfortable arm-chair, and proceeded to tell me stories just as they came into her head or were prompted by my desultory questionings.

Yes (she said); many girls come to hospitals as nurses after having had some momentary tiff with the objects of their affections. One pretty girl brought matters to a crisis in this way. Her lover had been hanging fire for a long time. Suddenly, she conceived it to be her duty to give up balls and costly dresses and to become a nurse. She went away without a farewell to her lover, who became frantic when he learned that he had probably lost her for ever. At last he was allowed to see her—in her nurse's costume. Her eyes wore a look of chastened resignation; her pretty print dress fitted without a wrinkle; her cuffs and collar were of the snowiest: he thought her an angel of goodness. She stayed a fortnight, and asked us all to the wedding, which took place at St George's, Hanover Square.

After she went, we had a very highly-strung, nervously exalted girl, who wanted three months' hospital training before becoming a missionary's wife and going out to do zenana work in India. But she didn't have much time to learn nursing. Her relations continually came to weep over her and exhibit her to friends, who, in their turn, insisted on the poor girl showing them all the 'interesting cases.' The friends and relatives would keep asking heads of wards if such saints often came there, and wanted to know why she wasn't put in a glass case or wrapped up in cotton wool. I warned the poor girl that she was not fit to go to India; but she went, and died three months after of climate and nervous excitement.

The next probationer was 'Our Lady of the Jonquils.' Her peculiarity was that she wore jonquils at all seasons, and was so distractingly pretty that most of the patients fell in love with her. When it came to her pinning part of a bunch of jonquils on a good-looking young fellow's dressing-gown, and putting the others in her hair, it was thought better that she should return to 'her people.'

'Cinderella,' her successor, was an exceedingly handsome, olive-skinned girl with picturesque tendencies. She could not endure cold, and every morning sat with her feet in the hot ashes of the fireplace when she first came on duty. In a cotton frock, she looked draggled and pinched with cold and was not at all effective; but, later in the day, she had a habit of twisting an Oriental handkerchief in her dark hair and looking like an Eastern queen. A grateful East End patient once presented her with a new half-crown for looking 'so like King Solomink's queen of Sheba, miss.' She fastened the half-crown to her chain and wore it as long as she stayed with us.

Of course, nurses are forbidden to take money

from the patients. Though twopence is a large sum to poor East End patients, a child once gave me sixpence. 'Mother says you've saved my life, and you must have it. She turns a mangle, and when she'd turned that sixpence she said: "Thank the Lord for this; now we can get her something good."' Another grateful patient once brought me an art peacock—green on a yellow ground—to put on my chair. I endured that antimacassar until one of the patients said it gave him homicidal mania, and the ward surgeon had it taken away in order to prevent a catastrophe.

I have frequently numbered policemen among my patients, and like them very much; they are so amenable to discipline when in hospital. One burly fellow was knocked down by a wagon and lost both his legs. He took a most philosophical view of the situation. 'No more rain dripping down my legs on winter nights, nurse. The Government's got to provide for me now.' It was necessary that he should be kept very quiet; but so many of his friends in the 'Force' would drop in at all hours to see how he was getting on, that we had to forbid their coming at all. After a few days, their anxiety to see him overcame their obedience to orders, and they conquered the difficulty by getting passes and coming in plain clothes. But there was no disguising their ponderous walk.

After my policeman recovered and was fitted with what he called 'a be-yew-ti-ful pair of wooden stumps,' I nursed an amorous platelayer through an attack of inflammation of the lungs. When he recovered, he proposed to me, and couldn't understand 'wot you wants to go aworkin' like that 'ere for, when you might marry a decent chap with two quid a week.' He was greatly dejected at being refused, and hung round the hospital for weeks after his discharge, blowing kisses up at the matron's window (he mistook it for mine) with maudlin tenderness.

The platelayer was succeeded by an Irishman. I never knew Irishmen lose their power of 'blarney.' When fairly convalescent, this one was allowed to get up for two hours a day every afternoon. The first day, he enjoyed it very much. On the next day I found Denis strolling about the ward in the early morning and making himself generally useful, but watching me from the corner of his eye all the time. 'Denis, Denis, this won't do.' 'Ah, shure, miss, I had to get up to look at you!'—'But you're to be up for two hours in the afternoon.' 'Shure, miss, it's always afternoon till I see your swate face foreinist the door!' And then I hadn't the heart to make him go to bed again. But he wasn't really so trying as an idiot boy, who was so fond of me that he ate my photograph.

Then I had a sailor, who called himself Jack Johnson; but I don't think that was his real name. He had broken his leg through an awkward fall over a coil of rope on a slippery deck. Johnson was a very nice patient—clean, and obedient to rules, and always good for a merry tale. But when the gas was lowered at night, he often talked in more serious fashion. 'I belongs to a respectable north-country family of decent God-fearing folks, with more fear than love about 'em altogether,' he told me in a moment of confidence. 'I couldn't stand the everlasting prayer-meetings

and the miserable Sundays, and used to shirk all I could. But it didn't do. They preached at me, morning, noon, and night, and promised me eternal punishment in any case. So, thinks I to myself, if I'm to be eternally in disgrace here, and eternally punished hereafter, I'll try and deserve it all.'

I was interested in spite of myself—the lad's reckless, bitter talk was so at variance with his honest blue eyes and sunshiny smile—and listened to the account of his running away to sea. He did not know whether any attempt had been made to track him, and had never heard one word from home for over six years.

When discharged from the hospital, he insisted on leaving me some curious shells, strung into a necklace; and when I objected, he coolly remarked: 'You'd better have 'em. You've been wonderful patient with me; and I reckon you're a good woman. There's a many that isn't that, worse luck for us. If you won't have the shells, I shall know you think I'm past praying for, and I'll chuck 'em into the gutter the first minute I gets outside.'

Months after, he sent me a misspelt, ill-written letter from his mother, telling of her thankfulness to 'them as cared for my boy.' There was also a postscript, in printed letters, from my *protégé*, saying he had not forgotten my advice, but had gone home. His mother and father were very much broken; but, please God, he'd look after them now, and they were free to own they had kept too tight a hand on him. 'You told me, straight, I'd acted cruel to 'em, nurse, and you're right.'

One evening, the patients' tea was cleared away, and they were chatting cheerfully amongst themselves, when the door opened, and a tall, handsome girl was introduced to us as 'The New Probationer!' The new probationer earnestly and thoroughly applied herself to each day's duties. In spite of her queenly carriage, she could make a bed admirably, and gave every promise of becoming an excellent surgical nurse. Still, she puzzled me. The girl never referred to her past or spoke of her future, and her reserve seemed strange in so young a woman, for she always appeared to be putting a strong restraint on her natural high spirits. One night, a girl was brought in who was dying from the effect of a railway accident. When she opened her eyes, they remained fixed on our probationer, who stood at a little distance from the door. I fetched the probationer to speak to the patient, when, to my surprise, a shrill cry broke from the sufferer, and our young nurse dropped on the chair by the bedside, exclaiming in an agitated voice: 'Oh Lizzie, Lizzie, is it really you?' The girl died that night. A few days later, I happened to be at work in my own room when our stately probationer entered.

'Can you spare me a few moments, Sister? I'm going away.' Before I could answer, she was down on her knees by my chair, sobbing on my shoulder as if her heart would break. 'I want to tell you,' she cried, 'about Lizzie, the woman who died the other night. It was all my fault she came by that train; she would never have left her home if I had not run away from mine. She was always a good girl, only rather wilful, and vexed her father because she

wanted to make a foolish marriage. At last, she said, no one cared for her, and even I, who was always her friend, had gone away and forgotten her. It's such a dull little village where we live, you know, Sister, and the people gossip and worry one. Lizzie was always being told she ought to give the man up. The end of it was that Lizzie had a great quarrel with her father, and started off in a rage to join an aunt and cousin, who are dressmakers in some rather poor neighbourhood near London. Then came the railway accident, and you know the rest.'

'Not quite all, I think. Why are you going to leave us?'

'Because,' she answered, 'I have no right to be here. My father did not wish me to come. My mother is dead, and my step-mother is an exasperating invalid; but I'm just going home to make the best of her! Perhaps she will be easier to live with when I go back again. If I had stayed at home and done my own duty, that poor girl might be still alive.'

So she went back to her duty, married happily, and is continually sending me things for my poor people.

Some of the old men are very reluctant to leave a hospital when cured. 'Oh nurse, can't you tell me how to stay in? I've tried all the other places, but this is the best, and I want to stay. I ain't wanted at home. There's no room for the likes of me. The house is too small, and I'm in the way. My friends will raise a trifle every month, if you'll only let me stay.'

Women will often come into our waiting-room just for a warm and a rest. One day I noticed a woman holding her head in her hands and moaning as if in great pain. 'What's the matter with you? Is it anything very bad?' 'Oh no, miss,' she laughed. 'I wanted a rest, and I thought you'd turn me out if I kept quiet.'

Poor people often beg for a dose of medicine in cold weather, just for the sake of getting something warm to drink. One poor old man used to ask for leave to go and see his friends every Sunday, and was driven back in a coster's barrow. 'Father allers likes to 'ave 'is reggler Sunday fit at 'ome,' the son explained; 'so we just loosens 'is 'ankercher an' lays 'im flat on the kitchen tiles till 'e comes to agin. Then we gives 'im a drop o' gin, an' drives 'im 'ome to the 'Orsepittle all werry conferable.'

I should like to take this opportunity of strongly protesting against parents allowing their children to become nurses until they are five or six and twenty, an age which has been fixed as the fitting one by a great many thoughtful men and women who have thoroughly studied the question. We began by taking any young lady who was good enough to leave home and put her time at our disposal. Now, nurses should be weeded thoroughly, so that we may get the very highest type. Nursing makes great demands on the physical strength of any young woman. Besides, there are many sights in a hospital which it is not well for young women to see.

Ladies sometimes come to the hospital and want to adopt pretty children. Once, by a little dexterous manœuvring, I persuaded a lady to adopt a very unprepossessing child. The little thing was brought to me just before Christmas, with frostbitten toes, and livid weals across her

thin shoulders. We cured her toes as well as we could, and washed her. Most of the neglect from which she had suffered was the neglect of necessity. The people who had picked up this deserted waif became too poor to keep her, and were so glad to get rid of her that they didn't trouble to come back. I found out an aunt of the child's; but when the aunt discovered the reason for my wishing to make her acquaintance, she moved, and left the waif on our hands. The girl wasn't interesting in any way. Fortunately, I remembered a certain West End lady who 'did good to her soul' by coming round the wards on Christmas Day to distribute toys. When she came, I said to her in the most heartless voice I could assume: 'Oh, this ugly little wretch is going to the workhouse to-morrow.'

She looked at me, her manner implying, 'These hospital people have no hearts at all.' 'Nurse, I can't bear to think of it,' she said.

'Yes, it is unfortunate,' I replied coldly; 'but no one wants her. She's not a nice child. Ugly, vicious, unpleasant in her habits. The workhouse will probably do her good.'

The lady began to grow indignant, but curbed herself with an effort. 'Would you do me a great favour, nurse?'

'Certainly,' I said, as if it didn't matter in the least, but all the while my heart was thumping away: 'She'll take it! She'll take it!'

'Don't. Promise me you won't let her go to the workhouse until you hear from me?'

'Oh, if you wish it.'

'I do wish it—very much. Thank you.'

Then she went away; but the upshot of it all was that she provided the child with a home in the country, paid a worthy old couple to adopt her, and gave the girl a year in which to overcome her bad habits and equally bad language. Of course, I warned the lady in question that she wasn't dealing with the customary Christmas-card child; but that only made her the more determined. It was not found necessary to send the girl to an Industrial School at the end of the year. She is now a happy, respectable young woman, with a husband and child of her own. Her patroness still thinks it a pity that 'so admirable a nurse should have so little heart.'

OUR GREATER SUN.

ONE soft rich glow, half roseate and half gold;
One sea of sunset glory in the sky—
Its verge invisible, its end untold—
That melts into the blue insensibly.
The source of all the gorgeous scene has met
And passed the far horizon's mystic bar,
But leaves its benediction brightening yet
The evening sky with glories spread afar.

Long years ago, another, brighter Source
Of glory passed our dim horizon line:
Nor can we see that light until, our course
Of twilight o'er, we hail the dawn divine.
Its glorious after-glow alone we see,
Until we wake, Sun of our souls, with Thee.

MARGARET KATE ULPH.

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WEALTH FROM WASTE.

IN nothing is the advance of civilisation and industrial science so evident as in the increasing use made of waste products. What would be untold wealth, if we only knew how to use it, is continually thrown away even now, and goes to pollute the rivers or to poison the atmosphere; but the waste is a mere fraction of what it was only a few years ago, and is diminishing fast. Enough to fill a public library might be written about the successive advances made by the pioneers of industrial chemistry, and the volumes would be as interesting as the exploration of Central Africa, or the search for the North-west Passage. Every few years, some intrepid explorer would freight his ship with the greater part of his worldly possessions, and venture out into unknown waters to face the reefs and sandbanks of engineering difficulties, and to overcome every obstacle by clever navigation. Frequently, the haven was never reached. Some whirlpool of fuel-consumption and working expenses swallowed up both ship and cargo, and the adventurer came back a ruined man.

The most widely known of these so-called waste-products is 'alkali waste.' At Widnes alone, five hundred acres are covered with malodorous deposits of this material to a depth of twelve feet. A disgusting yellow liquid oozes from this mass of ten million tons, and, getting into the sewers, gives off sulphuretted hydrogen, the offensive odour of rotten eggs. When first deposited, the waste contained a million and a half tons of sulphur in an available form, which is irreclaimable in the present state of our knowledge. As the value of sulphur is about four pounds a ton, this represents a loss of six million pounds. The problem not only of how to save this wasted material, but how to prevent the intolerable nuisance arising from it, has occupied the attention of alkali-makers for over half a century. It is only within the last four or five years, however, that a real solution has been found, and only recently that we have wit-

nessed the enforcement of the new process by the alkali inspectors.

In the manufacture of soda or alkali, oil of vitriol, known in chemistry as sulphuric acid, has to be employed. Now pyrites, from which most of our copper is obtained, contains a large quantity of sulphur. This is a hindrance to the copper-smelter, so he sends his pyrites to the alkali-maker at almost a nominal price, receiving it back again with the sulphur extracted. The sulphur goes into sulphuric acid, and, after the soda is made, is found in the tank waste. One manufacturer worked for thirty years and devoted a fortune to solving the difficulty of recovering sulphur, but was unsuccessful. Many others have attempted it, and only partially succeeded. They discovered several chemical processes capable of accomplishing it; but the cost was prohibitory, and Mr Cary was quite right when he said that sulphur recovery 'had long been a sort of Will-o'-the-wisp in the alkali trade, and had lured many a good man to serious discomfiture, if not to ruin.'

Messrs A. & M. Chance, the large alkali manufacturers of Oldbury, are the successful investigators. Their first attempt cost them ten thousand pounds and two years' hard work, but was commercially a failure, although a large amount of experience was gained. The apparatus they had erected for the first venture came in again for the second, which has now arrived at complete success, and will be applied shortly to all the works of this kind in the kingdom. The process consists in using the gases from the limekilns to decompose the waste, thus driving out sulphuretted hydrogen, the gas previously described as having an odour of rotten eggs. This gas—a compound of sulphur and hydrogen—is then passed through a kiln, invented by Mr C. F. Claus, together with a regulated quantity of air. The air supplied is just sufficient to burn the hydrogen, and the sulphur is deposited almost chemically pure in brick receiving-chambers. When one of the end chambers is opened, the interior is like some palace of the genii—long

stalactites of yellow and brown sulphur hang from the roof, and the walls are festooned with graceful wreaths of every conceivable formation. After all the sulphur has been removed, the waste, instead of being thrown away, is used for the manufacture of cement. The sulphur recovered has already reached nine hundred tons per week, and it is expected that in two or three years' time one hundred thousand tons per annum will be recovered by the Chance-Claus process. This will be sufficient to supply all our own wants, will leave the money we now pay to Sicily in our pockets, and sixty or seventy thousand tons will remain over for export.

Another important product in the alkali trade, muriatic acid or spirits of salt, was for a long time thrown away; and the canals round Widnes contained such a quantity of it that the barges had to be copper-fastened, as iron disappeared rapidly under its action. The acid is now most valuable. All the bleaching powder of commerce is made from it, and less than five per cent. is allowed to escape into the air.

In our gas-works, substances are being converted constantly from nuisances into valuable sources of profit. In fact, in these works, as in many others, the original object of the manufacture has become almost of secondary importance. For instance, in the alkali trade just mentioned, the soda itself is sold at a loss, the deficit being covered by the profit on what was formerly wasted. Tar and ammonia were at one time the bugbears of gas engineers; now, they enable gas to be sold at half its original price. To tar we owe carbolic acid, creolin, and other disinfectants; magenta, Hoffman's violet, and all the beautiful series of aniline dyes; sulphonal, antipyrin, and many powerful drugs; besides other things too numerous to mention. There is hardly any substance in the world of organic chemistry that cannot be obtained, directly or indirectly, from coal-tar; and yet the other day a gas engineer told the writer that he had just purchased sixty tons of tar which had been lying at the bottom of a canal for twenty or thirty years. Ammonia, which is washed out of the gas during purification, was formerly as great a nuisance to gas-makers as tar, but is now one of their chief sources of revenue. Without sulphate of ammonia, derived from gas liquor, it would be impossible to grow beet sugar, and the demand for this important manure is almost greater than the supply. Several works in the coal districts are devoted to the production of the hard, dense, coke used in metallurgical operations. Until recently, all their tar and ammonia was lost; but now they are as careful of it as the gas-makers. In iron-works, too, an immense quantity of capital has been expended in apparatus for recovering these products.

This brings us to another important section in which interesting progress has been made, almost since yesterday. Every possible device is being used in the great factories for economising fuel. The ashes and cinders from the furnaces are washed and separated by expensive machinery, every particle that will burn being returned to the fires. Forced draught, worked by means of steam-jets, is fitted to an increasing proportion of our boilers; for with this adjunct they will burn the finest dust. Indeed, it may safely be said

that they can be driven with the refuse from the other boilers. At our coal-mines, great improvements are now in vogue for rendering every atom of carbon brought up from the pit saleable. The coal is passed through mechanical washers and sorters, which separate it accurately into properly graded sizes. Not only is the coal rendered more valuable by being properly sorted, but even the finest dust is thus brought into use and compressed into briquettes. Every one has noticed the glittering veins of pyrites scattered through the coal. This pyrites contains a large proportion of the sulphur, and if not removed, goes into the air as oil of vitriol when the coal is burnt, besides destroying rapidly the furnace bars and other iron-work it comes in contact with. By washing, the pyrites is removed, and in addition to improving the quality of the coal by its absence, has a considerable value of its own. As it is, an enormous quantity of sulphuric acid is belched forth into the atmosphere both from factory chimneys and private houses, and any one living in our great cities has a very unpleasant personal experience of the injury it does to health and vegetation. The alkali inspector's Report tells us that, in St Helens alone, 36,108 tons of sulphur are annually poured into the air and lost. This finally represents 110,580 tons of sulphuric acid sent to pollute the atmosphere. In London, there must be fifty-five tons of sulphur or one hundred and eighty tons of oil of vitriol deposited on every square mile of land during the year.

Numberless other instances of wealth saved from waste might be quoted, if space permitted. In Cornwall, they have been working for years on the extraction of tin from the refuse thrown away by previous generations; companies even being formed for raising lost tin ore washed out to sea by the rivers. In France, artificial silk is to be made from a wood preparation by an apparatus copied from the spinnerets of the spider; and a few days ago, the Society of Chemical Industry was informed of the possibility of converting into vinegar the fine pulp carried away in suspension by the water used in paper-making. 'Waste not, want not,' is the motto throughout; and in the fierce rivalry which now exists between the manufacturers of our own and other countries, the competitor who finds the best use for his waste products must ultimately drive his opponents from the field.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAP. XVI.—'DANIEL WAS PREFERRED BECAUSE AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT WAS IN HIM.'

THERE can be no doubt that Daniel Trichinopoly won more and more upon his new master's confidence and liking. That day in Liverpool when George Suffield met and said farewell to Alan Ainsworth, Daniel had given such a sample of alertness as his master could appreciate. Somehow, Daniel had learned that Mr Gorgonio—the ugly Greek—had just received a consignment of exceptionally good Egyptian cotton, and was about to put it on the market. George hurried off to Gorgonio's office, saw a sample of the

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cotton, bought it at a cheap rate—for Egyptian was at that time quoted in the market at a somewhat low figure—and congratulated himself on the possession of Daniel.

'But, Daniel,' asked George, when they met at home, 'how did you know anything of Mr Gorgonio?'

'Mister George,' answered Daniel—for he had begun to drop 'Sahib' as unsuited to the usages of English commerce—'it will be an astonishment that I was met in the noble and great city of Liverpool with a gentleman of my own India, even and truly Mr Tanderjee, Parsee from Bombay.'

'Ah,' said George, 'Mr Tanderjee: I have done some business with Mr Tanderjee.'

'The same time I must say Mr Tanderjee take me with much talk, in our own language—oh yes!—to Mr Gorgonio. And with regard Mr Gorgonio is not Greek, etcetera; Mr Gorgonio is Perse.'

'What do you mean, Daniel?' asked George. 'He is Parsee, too?—or Persian?'

'Yes, Mister George,' answered Daniel. 'The fact is he is Perse of Persia. But I must say he has live etcetera in India, and he know to say in my language thing of all sort—oh yes! So just the same time we speak of cotton. With regards I hope you find, Mister George, that Mr Gorgonio is a nice gentleman for business.'

'Oh yes, Daniel,' answered George, and turned away, looking at his watch, as a man does who doubts he has been mispending his time.

But it was possible thus to ignore Daniel, to blot him out, so to say, whenever one was so minded; for Daniel was never obtrusive, never seemed to take offence, and was always gentle, bland, and smiling, and went and came softly. Indeed, his affection and his watchfulness were rather those of the cat than of the dog; and he purred softly his approval and satisfaction, his submission and attachment. Oh yes; Daniel was soft; so soft and gentle that one could not help stroking and liking him. It is probable George Suffield liked him all the more by reason of his difference from the Lancastrian faithful servant of whom he had near him an admirable example in old Tummas, who neglected no duty, and grumbled and growled very loudly if he saw any sign of his master neglecting any.

But Daniel's success with his master was not a complete satisfaction to himself. For while the many wondered at it as a thing out of nature, a few resented it as a slight to themselves. Whenever Daniel passed through the village the wives came to their cottage doors with babies in their arms, and stared at him as he went by, and made depreciatory remarks, not caring whether Daniel heard them or not. 'Be't a man or a monkey?' they would say. 'Be th' creature black a' through, dost think? Eh, what th' young mester sees in th' mon I canna mak' out!' And they, further, opined that Daniel worshipped images in his own country, and was probably guilty of other black and foreign practices. In spite of these things Daniel smiled on the children as he went by; but they hid their faces in their mothers' bosom or skirts, in fear of his black face and white turban. It was difficult, however, to endure the resentment of those who, like himself, were near the person of the young master, and

who thought they had a greater right to the confidence of the master than a black man and a stranger. Of these the most resentful were old Tummas and the Tame Philosopher. Tummas would cock his eye at him over his bent old shoulder and demand: 'Hast nought to do in the own outlandish country?—hast never a feyther or mother belonging tha?—that thou mun come and slide thysen into th' place o' an Englishman?' adding reflectively, while he narrowly considered Daniel this way and that: 'Conna think what th' young mester sees in tha! Aw ha' seen mony a better mon stuck in a field to scare th' crows fro' th' turmits.' Then Daniel would smile and say: 'With regard, Mister Tummas, you are an old man; but it is possible to say you are not more wise than an ass; so just the same time why I listen, why I respect? Eh?' And Tummas would angrily reply: 'Things is changed wi' me sin' I was young, see tha!—or I'd box tha for that!'—upon which Daniel would smile sweetly and still go and come softly.

But the resentment of Tummas was nothing to that of the Tame Philosopher—at least, in Daniel's opinion; for Daniel, while he despised Tummas, feared the Philosopher. It is not very easy to account for such fear. It is probable that to Daniel's half-barbarous mind M'Fie appeared the incarnation of learning—had he not seen how the great Sahib Suffield listened to him?—and, by that token, of witchcraft and general power to do evil; it is probable, too, that M'Fie imposed on Daniel's imagination by a resemblance to the missionary who had turned Daniel's parents—and so had turned Daniel—from Buddhism to Christianity. That resemblance was less in the Philosopher's garb, speech, or conduct, than in the fact that he filled a certain sort of missionary office. The elder Suffield on his migration south had cast about in his mind for what provision he could make for his Mentor without investing it with the odium of charity, and he had hit upon this, which was suggested to him by the description of an old chapel by a very ancient and feeble religious folk: That the Philosopher might prelect and hold classes for the advantage of such as cared to come on certain week-nights—to be chosen by him—and discourse on Life and mortality by the old dial and among the sinking and decaying tombstones of the little burying-ground. And the Philosopher did so, to his own infinite satisfaction; and he called the place *Academia*, not because of its likeness to a place where boys and girls acquire the rudiments of learning, but because of its similarity to a famous Greek school of philosophy. The Philosopher was always learned in his allusions. Moreover, the Philosopher redeemed his missionary character in Daniel's eyes by a remarkable oration on an advertised evening. It happened that the incumbent of the new village church—whose tower was built up as the tower of Jumley-Jee—had preached a pointed sermon on the text, 'And he hath made of one blood all nations,' because he had heard of the contempt and derision in which the blameless Daniel was held by his parishioners. Thereupon the Philosopher capped the incumbent's performance by giving on a week evening a lecture on ethnology. A good many people came together, and Daniel was also among them, and, to his great delight, heard himself—

there could be no manner of doubt it was he—alluded to as 'a member of the great Aryan, or Indo-European, family of nations, and second-cousin of every Englishman.' That oration produced a very reasonable protest from Daniel. He waylaid the Philosopher on his way home from the Acadèmia and spoke him fairly.

'With regard, O Guru,' said he gently, 'your so wise, good, and beautiful talk, etcetera, have made me think very much—oh yes!—in the head. With attention, I am, what you say, Indo-Europe—yes? I am of the great India: I am in Europe-ra—is it not? Then, by argument, I am in the race, family, household, etcetera, of the English—is it not? I beg to understand, O Guru; because why, you are the wise one, the learned one, the teacher of good and true things, and so forth.'

'Yes, Daniel, my friend,' crackled the conceited 'teacher of good and true things and so forth'—'most certainly, according to the best accessible evidence, you are, to all intents and purposes, of the same race as I am myself.'

'With regard, then, O Guru of the same race,' said the triumphant Daniel, 'why, then, do you not like that I am with or by the respectable Mister George? We are as one, and another—you and I—so just the same we have our respected chance, luck, etcetera. Mister George like to have me, as dressing-boy, confidential servant, what-not, etcetera: why not you like that he like? Eh?'

'Do I not like, indeed?' said the perplexed Philosopher. 'Assuming, Daniel, my friend, that I do not—remember, that I am not *admitting* that I do not: I am only *assuming* that I do not, you understand—we come to the great difference, eternal and insurmountable, between Opinion and Sentiment. Opinion is one thing: Sentiment is another: they are distinct the one from the other, and they do not necessarily touch or affect each other;' and so on the Philosopher crackled and maundered for ten minutes, Daniel completely losing himself in toiling after him and endeavouring to find a clear meaning in his maze of words.

Not many days afterwards it was made manifest that the Philosopher, however pious might be his opinion of Daniel's equality in physical and mental attributes, had no opinion at all of Daniel's moral qualities. George Suffield had asked the Philosopher to dinner one evening, not so much because he promised himself delight or edification in his company, but because he had promised his father that he would be 'kind' to him. M'Fie came rather in a grudging and morose than in a grateful and expansive mood; for he considered that, had his true friend, the elder Suffield, been at home, he would have been asked not once to dinner, nor twice, but as often as he cared to go. He was therefore somewhat distant and metaphysical with George during the first half of the meal, the more so that Daniel was present waiting at table. But George was good-humoured and talkative, the food was excellent, and the wine was good, and the hazy reserve of the Philosopher gradually disappeared, and he became his casual, crackling self.

'Do you happen to know anything of cotton, Mr M'Fie?' asked George.

'Cotton, sir?' said M'Fie, speaking with a

dewy comprehensiveness. 'I know all about cotton—all, I asseverate. I know cotton to be a plant grown in various parts of the world, most largely, I believe, in the United States of America.'—

'And what of India, Mr M'Fie? Cotton is grown largely in India—is it not, Daniel?'

'With regard, Mister George,' answered Daniel, smiling demurely, 'very much. But the Guru knows—oh yes!'

'—whose fruit or pod,' continued M'Fie, 'was, I doubt not, expressly designed by the Devil for the debasement and enrichment—though the terms, indeed, are synonymous—of this county of Lancashire.'

'One may call that,' said George with a laugh, 'the abstract, or brief chronicle of cotton.—What do you think of cotton, Daniel?'

'With regard, Mister George,' answered Daniel, humbly crossing his hands on his breast, 'I believe me to understand cotton as very good thing for the manufacture, the trade, and the business, etcetera. The native coolie of India, he would have no clothes to cover, no turban to keep the heat from the head, if there no cotton. With regard, me—I myself—would have no turban, if no cotton.'

'That, sir, only serves to convince me the more,' said M'Fie, without looking at Daniel, 'that the Devil is in it;' and he crackled very loudly into a dissonant laugh.

'With permission, may I say,' added Daniel, 'the respectable Sahib Suffield—he have no house, no mills, no clothes, no food, etcetera, if no cotton? Is it not?'

'Pardon me, sir,' said the Philosopher, still not looking at Daniel, but fixing his eye on the sparkling stopper of the port decanter; 'my admirable friend, George Suffield, is one of those who would live in the land, and verily would be fed, whatever happened to cotton, or if there never had been cotton; my dear sir, the very fowls of the air would bring George Suffield food, if he ever wanted it!'

'Still, Mr M'Fie,' said George, after a side-long appreciation of the enthusiastic encomium on his father, 'I think you are very unfair to cotton; considering that you and I and all of us eat cotton and drink cotton, build our houses of cotton and get our clothes out of cotton, find our pleasure in cotton (pass the wine, Daniel), and make our money of cotton!—No, Mr M'Fie, you must not depreciate cotton, especially since I have this very day invested a considerable sum in Indian cotton.—Daniel, you can go: we shall not want you any more.'

Daniel went, summing up with his eye in very doubtful and suspicious fashion the attitude and attention of the Guru. When he was gone, M'Fie broke forth. 'Young George Suffield,' said he, for all things had tended to make him valiant, 'I think it my bounden duty, as your father's friend and as profoundly your well-wisher, to tell you that in the general opinion you are too thick with that son of India and of darkness. He is too much with you, and you place an extravagant amount of confidence in him.'

'Ah,' said George, with perfect self-satisfaction and good-humour, 'you think that—do you? At least you say that is "the general opinion;" but it is yours also, I presume?'

'I don't shrink from declaring,' said M'Fie, 'that it is mine also. My dear young sir, if you must give confidence and take counsel, are there not old and tried friends of your father to whom you may turn, men of your own race and speech—like your humble servant—who have borne the burden and heat of the day?' And the Philosopher tried to look as if he had borne an extraordinary amount of burden and heat.

'No doubt,' said George, still good-humoured, 'there are men of that sort.'

'There was once, sir,' said M'Fie, with a pointed and inspired expression on his shrivelled countenance, 'a great king in Israel who was succeeded in the kingdom by his son. That son meant very well, but by comparison with his father he was a little king, a *roi fainéant*. At a critical moment in his own and his kingdom's history he turned from the old men who had counselled his father, and took advice from the young men who knew nothing, and he came to grief: ten-twelfths, sir, of his kingdom was rent from him! The name, sir, of the father was Solomon, and the name of the son was Rehoboam; and his history is set down as a warning for all time. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear!'

'And the point,' said George, smiling, 'lies in the application, as Cap'n Cuttle would say. But even Solomon took counsel with the Queen of Sheba—didn't he?—and she was blacker, I imagine, than even Daniel. For it's Daniel's colour you object to—which surprises me, Mr M'Fie, after your lecture of the other evening.'

'My dear young sir,' crackled M'Fie, in as brittle a temper as he ever permitted himself, 'it is not the black of Daniel's skin I object to, but the black of Daniel's mind. I would object just as much, no less and no more, to the black of a white man's mind. But speaking in general, sir, I would say that the history of Daniel's race and the history of himself, perhaps, also, predispose him to be wily, snaky, and crafty: craft is the inheritance of strength to which that kind of man is born; and speaking specifically, I would say that Daniel gives evidence that he is crafty and treacherous.'

'What evidence?' asked George, still good-humoured, but disposed to treat the question seriously, since he saw that the Philosopher was bent upon being serious.

Then the Philosopher expatiated at somewhat tedious length on the evidence of untrustworthiness and craft afforded by the honeyed (or treacled) smoothness of Daniel's speech, the softness of his step, and the cold, resolute frankness of his eye. Moreover, he asked, why should Daniel, a stranger and—comparatively speaking—a foreigner, profess such attachment and devotion to the person of young Mr Suffield, if he had not some secret end to serve?

'Well, Mr M'Fie,' said George finally, 'let us say no more about it. I am obliged to you for your intention of serving my father's son in the matter; but, believe me, he is not likely to do me any harm. There is nothing of any consequence entrusted to him: he is merely my servant, and as such I tell you frankly I like him and mean to keep him.—Now, have another glass of port.'

By-and-by, when it was time for the Philosopher to go home, George expressed his inten-

tion of accompanying him part of the way: the night was fine and warm, and he would like the walk. The Philosopher's cottage was on the farther side of the village, and their nearest and pleasantest way lay across the park and through the clough, where the brook wimpled and the rabbits frolicked. They had passed out of the park, crossed the brook, got well into the clough, and were within easy sight of the works, when George stopped with an exclamation. 'Is that a light?' he cried, pointing to a small building included in the wall which girdled the works.

'There certainly,' said M'Fie, 'seems to be a small light, from a candle or a lantern, moving about within that window on the upper floor under the tree!'

'Yes!' exclaimed George. 'That's the counting-house! And, by Jingo! the light must be in my private room!'

With that he started off, running towards the light, followed with labour by the Philosopher. They had run to within a stone-throw of the window when George again stopped short before something huddled against a bank. 'What's this?' he said, stooping.

'That'll be the creature's hat or turban,' said M'Fie.

George put out his hand and touched the huddled thing. 'No! Daniel's clothes! His turban'—turning them over—'and the rest! He can't have drowned himself?'

'Nay, nay, sir,' crackled the Philosopher. 'Be sure his end will not be by water! Let us push on first, and see what that light may mean. Have you any means of getting in without going round to the lodge?'

'I have the key in my pocket,' said George. 'There is a private door in the wall.'

So he ran to the door and put the key into the lock, while the Philosopher stood a step or two off and watched the light. Almost as soon as the key sounded in the lock and the door opened, the light went out.

'It's gone!' exclaimed M'Fie. 'The light's gone!'

'Stay there and see,' said George, 'if anybody comes out.'

M'Fie waited without, in some trepidation—extremely doubtful whether he could tackle the midnight marauder, who was certain to make a dash for escape—while George felt his way into the outer office, where he struck a match and lighted the gas—no one was to be seen—thence into the inner office and lighted the gas—still no one to be seen—whence an iron corkscrew stair led up to his private room. He climbed the stair, and lit the gas there also. There was no one—no one to be seen secreted anywhere; but there was evidence that some one had been there; for he could not so far have forgotten himself as to leave drawers open, even if he had left them unlocked. He opened the window and called to M'Fie: had any one come out? 'Not a soul; not a creature,' answered M'Fie. He left the gas burning throughout, and went to M'Fie.

'Now, Mr M'Fie,' said he, 'I come to you for advice. I am sure we cannot both have been mistaken: we saw a light in that window. I enter and pass through all these rooms, and search them: I see, I find nobody; and yet I am

tolerably certain the drawers of my writing-table are not as I left them. What in this crisis do you, my father's old friend, advise me to do?"

"What do I advise, my dear young friend?" exclaimed McFie, loud enough for all the birds in the trees to hear. "I would advise you to find the head that should have been inside yon hat, or turban, we saw a few minutes ago."

"Daniel again!" said George. "Very well; let us find Daniel."

He locked the office door, and they both returned to the place where they had seen Daniel's clothes. When they reached it, they saw, to their amazement, Daniel himself seated on the bank, completely clothed, all save his boots, which he was in the act of putting on.

"Where have you been, Daniel?" asked his master. "What have you been doing?"

"Been, Mister George? Been doing, Sahib? With regard, I have been in the water of the little river what flow delightful, sweet, cool, etcetera, down there—oh yes! With regard again, a second time, I have caught two pretty fishes for the Sahib's breakfast"—he showed a pair of trout lying near him—"so just the same time I put me into the water of the nice little river, because the water was sweet and cool, etcetera, and I was not. I wash me, and I put my clothes upon me again.—And that, Mister George, is the whole story."

BOTANICAL 'SPORTS.'

Few people who visit our flower-shows, except those who are, as it were, actually behind the scenes, are aware of the curious freakishness of Nature, to which we owe the immense diversity of foliage, flower, and fruits which we find exhibited. Many doubtless impute this to high culture in the shape of extra warmth and protection, coupled with richly manured and prepared soils; and in many cases, the huge size and splendid development are so largely due to these adventitious aids, that without them a speedy retrogression is found to ensue. As a familiar instance of this we may cite the heart's-ease or pansy, which in some old neglected gardens will be found to have reverted altogether to the wild type, such as we find it in many parts of Great Britain, though of course in such cases it must be an open question whether the original, presumably fine blooming, plants have themselves reverted, or whether they have perished altogether, and only left their seedlings behind, of which the nearer normal types alone have survived in the struggle for existence. In any case, we have here the reversal of the process by which the horticultural varieties are obtained, since in the one case Nature left alone selects the hardiest and eliminates the tenderer but more highly developed forms; while in the other, man steps in with his ideal of a perfect blossom, and by eliminating the small and hardy ones, and artificially protecting and cherishing the finer types, at length establishes a strain of infinite superiority, so far as size, make, and colour are concerned, the cream of which we see at the shows aforesaid.

If, however, Nature did no more than yield a larger development as the results of higher feeding and special protection, our florists would make but little progress. When, therefore, we find a magnificent double crimson flower—say a dahlia five or six inches across, and built up in the most symmetrical manner from centre to circumference—evolved from a simple single star-shaped normal bloom of a quarter the size, and of a bright yellow tint, we must obviously look for something more than mere feeding; and we find this something more in the freakishness to which we have alluded. In the ordinary course of Nature, as we all know, a seed produces a plant so nearly like its parent, that practically it cannot be distinguished from it when fully grown; and the blossoms are so nearly like each other as to be practically identical. The various parts, too, of the plant, shrub, or tree, are to all intents and purposes replicas of each other in leafage, general habit of growth, and so on. Now and again, however, this rule is broken through in all the cases named, the seed producing a plant differing more or less from the parents; individual blooms may appear differing widely from the rest; or portions of the plant, such as a root-sucker or branch, may be thrown out of widely different character from its companions.

These divergences are the cultivator's opportunities, and hence those who raise large numbers of any special flower, fruit, shrub, or tree are always on the lookout for 'sports,' as they are termed, through which they arrive from time to time at types differing widely in all respects from previous ones. This aid is immensely enhanced by the fact that when once the normal form of a plant has 'broken,' its capacity for further variation, as a rule, increases enormously, and the cultivator has then merely to raise in large numbers and do his selecting on a systematic basis in order to arrive sooner or later at his ideal type. To obtain this ideal is, however, by no means a straight and simple matter in many cases. Tulips—to take a special instance—when raised from seed require several years before they reach the blooming stage, and even then the innate possibilities of the blossom may not appear for several years more, the first blooms differing markedly from the type which the experienced grower expects, and obtains later on; so that patience is a very essential factor in the raising of new varieties through the seed.

The capacity for further variation, too, cuts both ways—that is, there is reversion as well as evolution, so that many seedlings are inferior and worthless. We have heard from one of the best authorities on dahlias, for instance, that for every new variety of value, thousands of inferior seedlings have to be raised; and not only raised, it must be remembered, but raised to blooming point, which is by no means done in one season with the majority of bulbous plants. Another drawback with which the florist has to contend is the liability with some of the finest types to become inconstant, and revert after a brief period of promise—a very aggravating fact, indeed, when a flower, it may be of quite a new type of form and colour, and hence of great value, harks back, with greater or less suddenness, to some progeni-

torial form, and leaves but a memory behind it. So great is this power of variation through the seed in many highly cultivated plants, that no reliance whatever can be placed upon the seed as a means of reproduction of a new type, which has therefore to be propagated by cuttings or division of the roots.

This brings us, however, to another phase of the matter—namely, bud-sports, in which new forms are generated in some occult way in the bud instead of in the seed—an offset, or, it may be, a branch, then appearing with different characters from its fellows. Many curious examples exist of this; the double dark crimson hawthorn, for instance, originated upon the pink variety, a branch appearing one season laden with the crimson flowers, from which branch a large stock was speedily raised and disseminated far and wide. The white moss-rose was a bud-sport upon a red moss-rose bush; and singular to relate, when this shoot was removed for propagating purposes, it was replaced by two others which gave the striped variety. A large number of chrysanthemum varieties have originated in this fashion, though the sport is usually confined to variation in colour, the widely differing types being mainly due to seed variation.

As a rule, sports of this class are permanent—that is, they retain their character when propagated by cuttings or division; the offspring from seed, however, are more or less liable to revert to the parental form. It is also not an uncommon thing to find partial reversion exhibited, branches appearing with the parental character reasserted; thus we have seen the pink hawthorn with branches bearing white blossom, the ancestral blood having locally got the upper hand. Perhaps one of the most singular instances of this method of variation is seen in the peach and nectarine, both of which in many well established cases have appeared on the same tree; that is, a tree which had previously for many years only borne peaches, suddenly produces a branch which bears nectarines instead. Nay, more; instances are recorded where a single fruit has been half peach and half nectarine. Peach-stones have yielded nectarine trees, and *vice versa*; and in fact, the two fruits, different as they are in appearance and flavour, would seem to be two forms of the same thing, just as some plants bear two sorts of flowers.

From the examples given, which may be multiplied almost *ad infinitum*, it will be seen that the saying, that 'Nature does not move by jumps,' is hardly justified by facts, since every one of these cases of 'sporting' is more or less of a jump, and in the extreme cases a very wide jump indeed. The florist, as we have seen, has his field of operations immensely widened by this capacity, which enables him from time to time to exhibit new types of floral beauty, which would otherwise never have been dreamt of. But he does not need to confine himself to mere selection; by cross-fertilisation among his types, he can combine them to any extent, and thus produce an endless range of form and colour, which he can mould and modify almost as he will until he attains his ideal, whatever that ideal may be.

One of the most striking examples of what can be done through the variability of the seed induced by simple sporting, and without the aid

of cross-fertilisation at all, is seen in the well-known Shirley Poppies. These poppies, which range through every tint, from the purest white, through all shades of pink, to darkest crimson, the grades including innumerable subvariations, in the shape of marginal tints, so that practically it is difficult to find two plants alike in flower, were all raised from a common corn-poppy which the Rev. W. Wilks of Shirley Vicarage, Croydon, found in his garden there when he first took possession. The garden had partly become overrun with weeds, and among them a number of common corn poppies had established themselves from the neighbouring fields; one of these Mr Wilks observed differed somewhat in tint from the ordinary; he therefore marked the blossom and secured the seed when ripe. The following season the offspring showed several distinct breaks; and by continued selection—one feature of which was the constant elimination of all plants showing the normal black centre—in a few years the now well-known and wonderful strain of delicate flowers became distributed far and wide, and were named Shirley Poppies from their place of origin.

With annuals, as in this case, where each season yields a fresh crop, a much speedier evolution is of course practicable than in the cases previously cited, where years must elapse ere the plants reach the seeding and blooming stage. Of course, when a flower breaks away from the normal in this fashion, and in later generations yields a range of distinct tints and forms, as in this case, a considerable amount of the subsequent variation may be imputed to the crossing of the different flowers by bees, &c., the inherent tendency to vary in the resulting seed being thus materially enhanced. In a previous article on 'Fern Freaks,' the peculiar capacity of ferns, and especially of those species native to Great Britain, was particularly dwelt upon. The freakishness of Nature in these plants is probably unparalleled in any other branch of botany, the abnormal forms, which are constant both in themselves and in their progeny, numbering many hundreds, reckoning those only which have been found perfectly wild in the various districts where ferns luxuriate.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

CHAPTER II.

MISS KITTY LANGLAND—or, to be strictly accurate, Miss Langland, for she was the eldest—was an extremely charming, handsome, and ingenuous girl of some two-and-twenty—of that naturally good, bright, gentle, refined, and innocent, and not too clever type which it is to be hoped England will cultivate and cherish till the end. With no eye whatever to the main chance, she yet had a very narrow and prejudiced view of the kind of man she would like to have for lover and husband. She had a pronounced aversion to the genus 'cad,' under which generic title she somewhat unreasonably included all who made money, or a living, in business, or who stood behind counters or sat at desks. It never entered the simple prejudiced mind of either her father or herself that Mr Purvey's son could be other than

a 'cad,' with his hands crossed behind like his father's when he appeared unoccupied, as if to keep them from picking and stealing. Had her father begged her to agree to marriage with him, I have no doubt she would have said: 'Yes, father—for your sake;' for she had the good woman's passion for self-sacrifice. But her father presented no such petition. On the contrary, his argument ran to unnecessary fullness the other way, and Kitty only too readily mingled her indignation with his at the 'insolence' of Purvey's suggestion.

'The cool impudence of the man!' she passionately exclaimed. 'His son! The idea!' (Kitty was not very eloquent.) 'A poor, little, mean, vulgar, long-nosed thing like himself, no doubt! The cheek of it!' (Kitty was modern enough to know, and to use a word of slang now and then.)

'But now, Kitty, my dear,' said her father, 'we must think what we are to do. We've got ourselves into a mess!—At least, I have dragged you into the mess with me!'

'Don't say that, father dear,' said Kitty, tenderly embracing him with arm and look. 'Let us think.'

And Kitty sat down to think violently. I have said that she was not too clever—not too actively clever: very active cleverness tends too commonly to nerves and thinness; and nerves and thinness are to be discouraged in women—but she had a practical wit of her own, and in a little while, after one or two ineffectual suggestions, at which her father shook his head, she presented him with a workable plan.

'The Fairfield Farm, father,' said she, 'is worth more than six thousand pounds—isn't it?—even in these bad times.'

'Certainly it is, my dear,' said her father, looking up from his own cogitation.

'Very well. Let us go up to town, and boldly tackle some of the horrid business people that manage these things; and let us raise enough to pay Mr Purvey all we owe him, and then never see him again.'

'Yes, we might at least try that, my dear,' said the Squire, desperately thrusting his head into the first opening that presented.

The sun, therefore, when it looked through the London haze next morning but one found Kitty and her father occupying lodgings in Clarges Street. How the Squire fared in his attempts to negotiate a larger mortgage on the Fairfield Farm does not concern us here; but an adventure of Kitty does.

It was 'the season,' but—since they had not come up for the season, because the Squire could not afford it—they had resolved to let none of their friends in town know of their presence. The Squire, however, had gone to his club one morning when he thought no one would be there, and had run almost into the arms of his old school-fellow, Colonel Swetenham, just returned from India. The Colonel insisted on coming to call on the Squire's daughter; and the result of his calling was an invitation to dinner—a 'quiet dinner'—at the Colonel's house. Mr Langland and his daughter went, and found that the hospitable Colonel's quiet dinner-party consisted of thirty people. Miss Langland was taken down by a handsome, reserved, sun-burnt

young man, a Mr Godfrey, who had returned from Burma in the ship with the Colonel.

Kitty and her companion were both shy, and they were perhaps the more attracted to each other at first for that reason. They began in the usual way, by uttering inanities such as a grim and earnest philosopher like Thomas Carlyle would wonder that any two human beings, set even for a moment together 'between the two Eternities,' could ever bring themselves to speak. The earnest Thomas would recommend 'silence' rather than that; but, unfortunately, silence at a dinner-table would be considered rude or exceedingly awkward. And, after all, the human mind is so blessedly constituted that it may easily progress from the 'intense inane' to the sane and pithy, even as Kitty and her companion did.

Kitty's companion first opined it had been a very fine day, and Kitty agreed with him—with the reservation 'for London.' Then Kitty's companion supposed that she was come to town for the season, and Kitty answered: No; her father and she were only up from the country for a few days on business—frankly adding, with a laugh, that her father could not afford that year to stay in town for the season. Kitty's companion glanced at Kitty, and that was the first sign he gave of interest in her. To show interest is to excite interest; and Kitty began to consider her companion more closely, and to find him very handsome and very agreeable.

'Times, I suppose,' said he sympathetically, 'have been very bad in the country?'

'In our part of the country they have been,' she answered.

'What, may I ask,' said her companion, 'is your part of the country, Miss Langland?'

'Sussex,' she answered.

'Oh,' said he, with a fresh spice of interest, 'I'm going down to Sussex in a few days.'

'Sussex,' she replied, with a smile, 'is a large county, Mr Godfrey.'

'I might retort,' said he, also with a smile, 'with your own observation, Miss Langland. Sussex, it is true, is a large county, and it has, I believe, more than one soil—the productive and the unproductive.'

'Ours is the unproductive,' she answered mischievously; then relenting, because he seemed really to wish to know the exact locality where she dwelt, she added, 'we are in the north.'

'It is to the north I'm going,' said he with still livelier interest: 'to the neighbourhood of North Stanstead.'

'How odd!' said she. 'That is our neighbourhood!'

'Is it, indeed?' he exclaimed. 'How singular! One might almost say there is the long arm of coincidence evident in that. What kind of country is it?'

He probably meant one thing, while she took him to mean another.

'Oh,' she answered, 'there are some nice people. But, you see, we are so near town that a good many horrid business men have settled down about us.'

'It must be dreadful,' said he, considering her, 'to have one's privacy invaded by mere business people. I suppose they make themselves very offensive?'

'There is one dreadful old man,' she burst out, being full of the subject which troubled her, 'that has built a frightful villa in concrete near us.'

'Concrete?' exclaimed he. 'Why in concrete, of all materials? For cheapness?'

'No,' she answered; 'I think not. Concrete is one of his fads—as everything ugly and hypocritical is. His house is concrete, all his walls are concrete.—I believe,' she added, with a laugh of enjoyment at her own unusually sharp wit, 'he is concrete himself!'

'Better, perhaps he may think,' said her companion, 'to be concrete than abstract.'

'A dreadful, ugly, mean, and mischievous old man!' she continued, without heeding his remark. 'You must have seen his name about: it is at railway stations and in the carriages, on omnibuses, and everywhere: "Purvey's Patent Food for Infants and Invalids."'

Kitty's companion started a little, cast a quick glance on Kitty, and smiled; but Kitty did not see these phenomena: her eyes were on her plate, and her attention was given to the deep-seated grievance that moved her, to which she could not give expression.

'Oh yes; I have seen the name,' said he. 'And,' he added with a laugh, 'the fact is the man is the very person I'm going down to see on a matter of business.'

'Oh, Mr Godfrey!' Kitty exclaimed. She cast on him a glance of alarm and distress.

'I am very much obliged to you,' said he, reassuringly, 'for letting me know the kind of man he is. But, surely,' he continued, 'the old man must have done something worse than build walls of concrete, for you, Miss Langland, to call him such names?'

There was an exquisite compliment in the tone and emphasis of 'you, Miss Langland.'

Kitty was pleased; she blushed a little. 'Perhaps,' she admitted frankly, 'I have spoken more in anger than I should. But we don't like Mr Purvey: he is—he is not a nice man. My father, though, could tell you more about him than I can.'

And then they talked of other things, and, in the common phrase, they 'got on very well together.' Kitty's companion lost his reserve of manner; and Kitty herself became so interested in him and in his doings—she discovered he was a scientific person—an engineer and mineralogist, or something of the kind; for he had been several years in India in the service of the Government, and lately he had been in Burma to look for two such different things as ruby mines and coal-measures—she became so interested that she thought it would be 'nice' to know more of him.

When the ladies retired, it was to be remarked that Mr Godfrey made haste to have a word or two with his friend and host, after which they both moved down to where the Squire sat.

'I want, Langland,' said the Colonel, 'to particularly introduce to you my friend Godfrey. He is going down to your neighbourhood to-morrow on a small matter of business: he is the kind of clever fellow, you know, that just takes a look round, and then tells you, like winking, what kind of rocks are underneath, and what the rocks contain. I hope you'll be good to him.'

'Charmed, I'm sure,' said the Squire.

Then they all three talked, and when they had talked for some time, Mr Godfrey withdrew.

'He seems a clever, agreeable fellow,' said the Squire.—'Where did you say, Swetenham, that he was going to stay near us?'

'He is going down to a man named Purvey,' answered the Colonel, 'and I suppose he will stay there.'

'At Purvey's?' exclaimed the Squire. 'Oh!'

'Why?' asked the Colonel. 'Is Purvey an objectionable person?—a sort of person a man shouldn't know?'

'Well,' said the Squire, feeling and considering the slender stem of his claret-glass, 'it would perhaps be scarcely fair to say that. But I don't like him—he is not generally liked—and he has played me a very ungentlemanly trick. He may think it's business-like, but at any rate it's ungentlemanly.—But,' said he, looking up suddenly with a shrewd frown on his brow, 'you said your friend was going down on business; what business can Purvey—"Purvey's Patent Food," you know—have in Mr Godfrey's line?'

'Godfrey,' said the Colonel, dragging out his moustache, and trying to see the end of it, 'has been asked, I believe, to pronounce an opinion on the results of some boring operations.'

'Oh, ah! Boring!' exclaimed the Squire, looking very curious. 'I saw only the other day that some mysterious business of that sort was going on. Purvey has been very secret about it.'

'Frankly, Langland,' asked the Colonel, smoothing out his moustache, 'would you say that Purvey is a man that I—or my friend—should have nothing to say to?'

'Well, frankly, Swetenham,' said the Squire, looking up again from the contemplation of his glass, 'I don't think I ought to go so far as that. I am tempted to call him a canting, grasping, and scheming old rascal; but then I admit there would be a great deal of personal feeling in saying that. The fact is, I have had what he would call "a business transaction" with him, and he has got me in a corner with it. The other day—quite in a polite, canting, business-like way, I admit—he offered me the choice of alternatives: either to settle that business out of hand—which was impossible—or to compound it easily and advantageously by accepting his son, whom we have never seen, as a husband for my daughter!'

'For Miss Langland, you mean?' said the Colonel, quickly and nervously tugging at his moustache.

'Yes; for Kitty.'

'And what did you do?'

'I was civil,' said the Squire, smiling wryly. 'I couldn't afford to quarrel with him at the moment, and I put him off: I had a week in hand, and I thought I might find some way of settling his business and clearing off all connection with him. That's why we came up to town.'

'I see,' said the Colonel, and he appeared to be looking very deep indeed. 'Will you meet me at the club to-morrow morning, and we can talk more fully of that, if you like?'

They withdrew to the drawing-room; and the Colonel took an early opportunity of having a few words aside with his young friend Godfrey, after which Godfrey was assiduous in his attentions both to Miss Langland and to her father.

They became so pleased with each other that they parted with great kindness and cordiality.

'We shall be home in two days or so, I think,' said the Squire; 'and we shall be delighted to see you.'

'You are coming to see us, then?' said Kitty. 'I am so glad;' and then she blushed a little, as if she feared she had been too frank.

'Mr Langland has been so good as to ask me,' said Godfrey. 'I should like to give myself the pleasure of seeing you before, I fear, you will be ready to receive me.'

THE ROMANCE OF THE MARKET-PLACE.

IN and around the Market-place was the heart of every old-world town. High Streets, squares, public gardens, quays and wharfs, might have reflected the grandeur and wealth of the town more distinctly in the eyes of the stranger; but they bore the same relation to the market-place that the veins and arteries bear to the heart in the human body. History in these old towns seemed to be centred about their market-places; and the fact that, business having become more centralised by improved methods of communication, the inhabitants of so many so-called market towns now flock to central depôts, gives the faded, forlorn aspect of many a market-place just that romantic gloss which is given to an old building by mantling ivy and crumbling walls.

The mediæval market-place appears to have played very much the same part in civic life that the newspaper press plays to-day. The voice of the people, which only growled and grumbled or sighed and moaned amongst the back streets, broke out in full volume in the market-place. News, until it received the market-place stamp, was uncertain and untrustworthy. In the suburbs it was a mere whisper; in the by-lanes and back streets it became a rumour; in the High Street it gathered force and arrested attention; in the market-place the voice of Authority confirmed or contradicted it.

The special correspondent was there in the shape of herald or messenger. The 'Society paragraphist' was represented by the retailer of back-stair news or alehouse gossip. If a man wanted a servant or a situation, or a house or anything belonging to a house, he went to the market-place. Fashion in the cut of clothes originated with the gallants who swaggered there. If a man wanted to hear the last ballad or lampoon, he went there. When printed books were rare and costly, popular fiction was to be heard at the booth of the public story-teller, and sermons at the tub of the public preacher. In the market-place the popular hero received his triumph, and the criminal met with his deserts; war and peace were proclaimed there; new laws were announced there; festivals, fasts, holidays, and celebrations were notified there; in short, if a man wanted to keep up with current opinion and current events, it was necessary for him to frequent the market-place.

The dogs, the secret tribunals, the despots, the inquisitors, feared plots which were hatched in the market-place far more than those which were concerted in out-of-the-way nooks and

corners; for a sudden, well-timed swoop might crush the plot of the back room; but to defy the market-place was to defy the People, and the tyrant who turned a deaf ear to the appeal or remonstrance which came from a single house or a single street, found it his best policy to face forbearingly the clamour of a market-place crowd.

If there is any life at all in a town it will show itself in the market-place. The transaction of actual business may be very small; but people flock together and move with some approach to briskness; there is a hum of voices, and a clatter of feet, and a rumble of wheels, and the inns do a comparatively roaring trade, and the local dogs are startled and hustled into activity, and tradesmen spend less time than usual lounging about their shop doors.

The romance of the market-places of decayed old towns is so fascinating that we are apt to forget how really pathetic it is. When Romney and Rye and Sandwich were flourishing ports, when soldiers and sailors and merchants and toilers crowded the streets, many of which are now grass grown, and big ships lay alongside the now deserted quays and wharfs, we may revel in fanciful presentment of the scenes upon which the grave old houses in their market-places must have looked, for these old Cinque Ports were fighting as well as trading towns; and more than once showed themselves worthy of their proud title—the eyes of England.

When the eastern fen country was dotted with splendid abbeys, we may imagine that the market-places of the little towns which clustered around them, such as Ramsey, Thorney, Whittlesea, and Crowland, not to speak of those in places which have retained their importance, such as Ely, Boston, and Peterborough, must have been active business centres, although nowadays the stillness and desolation, and the disappearance of the ancient water-ways which served as roads, necessitate large drafts upon our fancy.

With what stirring memories of old days the Grassmarket and the High Street of Auld Reekie are linked! What a procession of historical and romantic figures pass before us as we stand under the old cross in the market-place of Merrie Carlisle!—William of Cloudesly, Fergus M'Ilvor, Prince Charlie and his men, Meg Merri-lies or rather her prototype, Jean Gordon, marching boldly along through the crowd, shouting:

To wanton me, to wanton me,
Ken ye what maist wad wanton me?
To see King George hung up at Rome,
To see King Jamie crowned at Scone,
To see England taxed and Scotland free,
This is what maist wad wanton me!

and then hustled away to her death in Eden River; Hobbie Noble and a score of romantic rascals passing to their deaths on 'Haribee'; the burghers whispering the news of the rescue of Kinmont Willie by the Bold Buccleuch, and many others.

So crowd the figures in the other Border market-places—Percy and Douglas, Christie of the Clinthill and Dandie Dinmont, Widdrington, Little Jock Elliot, Scotts and Armstrongs and Turnbulls and Rutherfords from the Scottish side of the Border: Charltons and Fenwicks and Roddams and Forsters and Musgraves and Robsons

from the English side—all pass before the old gray houses and over the time-worn stones, and keep us moralising over a string of trite quotations: 'Autres temps, autres mœurs,' 'Tempora mutantur,' &c., 'Sic transit gloria mundi,' until we feel a melancholy which corresponds well with the stillness and lifelessness around us.

Not a whit less fascinating is the romance which lingers around the market-places of the old-world West of England towns. What a buzz and a stir there must have been in Plymouth and Dartmouth and Totnes and the Tor Bay towns in the old war-times, beginning with that famous summer's evening when the little Scottish craft dashed in with news of the approach of the Invincible Armada, continuing throughout those long years of hammer and tong work between Englishmen and Frenchmen, and only ending when the last privateer sailed proudly in with her string of prizes!

What famous figures must have walked and talked in the market-places of the North Devonshire towns when the rage for conquest and plunder on the fair seas stretching away towards the Spanish Main was at fever-heat, and the most potent, grave, and reverend signiors lost their heads for a while, and embarked their fortunes in adventure ships! Drake and Raleigh, Grenville and Hawkins, Frobisher and Hudson, brighten up the now dusky old houses with their picturesque attire, and wake the echoes with their brief, sailor-like talk in that terse speech which we still love so well.

Later on comes William the Silent on the scene, first in quiet, fishy old Brixham, then at Newton-Abbot, proclaimed king in the market-place amidst solemn silence at a spot still marked by a stone; finally, at Exeter, where his court was first recognised as a formal substantiality.

Still more stirring are the associations of west-country market-places with the ill-fated enterprise of Monmouth. It was in the market-place of Lyme, in Dorsetshire, that his first standard and blue flag was set up. It was in the market-place of Taunton, every house of which was decorated with flowers and greenery, where he received at the hands of a bevy of fair young Somersetshire damsels a banner gorgeously embroidered with royal emblems, and where, a few days later, he was proclaimed king. The same pageantry filled the market-place at Bridgewater a week later with an enthusiastic crowd, and still later, stirred little Frome into excitement. But excitement of a very different kind was soon in store for these same market-places. From the moment the first batches of fugitives came pouring into Bridgewater with the news of Sedgemoor, a reign of terror set in, the memory of which is fresh to this day. What Kirke and his 'Lambs' began, Jeffreys completed. In the market-place of Winchester, Alice Lisle, already condemned to be burned, was beheaded. At Dorchester, thirty 'rebels' were hanged in the market-place. Throughout Devonshire the market-place of every town which had furnished Monmouth with soldiers became the scene of executions. In all, three hundred and twenty 'rebels' were hanged during this terrible circuit, and as publicity was an essential of the punishment, we may be sure that the majority of them met their fate in the market-places of their native towns.

Turning Londonwards, we pause in the busy, lively Oxford of to-day. In its old market-place, Crammer, Latimer, and Ridley suffered martyrdom for their faith; later on, here was proclaimed that Parliament of Charles I. which defined the gulf between him and his opponents; and still later, the voice of the people rose angrily and furiously at the high-handed dealing of James II. with the Fellows of Magdalen.

Finally, what pages of history are unfolded to us as we think of ancient Smithfield when standing in the beautiful Smithfield of to-day. They are pages which range from the days when gallants thronged to win their spurs at the jousting ground of the 'Smooth Field,' when William Wallace met his heroic death and Wat Tyler got his deserts; when, under Mary, the 'pale martyr' in his sheet of fire' was an every-day entertainment for the inhabitants of the quaint old houses; when 'Bartleny' Fair was a vigorous and flourishing saturnalia, until we reach the 'Old Smiffle' of Thackeray and Dickens with its scenes of blackguardism and revolting cruelty; and then the reformed Smithfield which we know.

Not less striking is the interest and romance of the foreign market-place. No one with an atom of sentiment in his composition can stand in the Piazza del Erbe at Verona without thinking of Montagues and Capulets, Speed and Launce and Launce's dog, and the mighty Scaligers, whose gorgeous tombs are hard by. In the Place of St Mark at Venice were enacted all the scenes which make up the intensely interesting drama of the Queen of the Adriatic's history. The Forum of Rome was the 'hub' of the Old World; Roman history and the Roman Forum are indissolubly linked together: most of the greatest and wisest and grandest and vilest men of the Old World must have known its features familiarly, whether in all the pride of their stateliness and beauty, or as melancholy relics of a dim Past dotted about the cattle-market, such as we see it on the famous canvas in the Dulwich Gallery known as the 'Campo Vaccino at Rome,' whereon are graziers from the Campagna bartering their beasts on the site of the rostrum whence Mark Antony delivered his oration after the murder of Caesar, a herd of oxen cropping the grass off the base of the Column of Phocas, and a party of citizens carousing amid the venerable pillars of the Temple of Saturn.

The market-places of Antwerp, Haarlem, and Utrecht still speak to us of the terrors of the Inquisition, and the wholesale butcheries of Alva and his lieutenants; whilst those of Madrid and Seville and Valladolid tell us still of the glories of Ferdinand and Isabella, of Columbus, and of *autos da fé* innumerable. It was from the market-place at Wittenberg that Luther started at the head of the procession of university grandees to burn the Pope's Bull on Elbe banks. He who goes to Bruges or to Ghent, or to Ypres or to Nuremberg, and sees not their market-places with an intelligent eye to their past, performs but ill his holiday duty. Past these quaint old houses of the Flemish guilds in the Grande Place of Brussels must have poured the British regiments on their way to Waterloo upon that famous eve. In the Piazza della Signoria of Florence, the forum of the old Florentine commonwealth, all the stirring episodes of the city's history were

enacted; and as we gaze on the Palazzo Vecchio, on the Bargello, and the exquisite Loggia, Guelphs and Ghibellines, the Medici, Savonarola, Dante, Michelangelo, Alfieri, Machiavelli, and a score of other names 'familiar in our mouths as household words,' come to our minds.

Far away over the seas we still find the romance of the market-place, strong and suggestive, if not so varied and intense as in the historical cities and towns of the Old World. In the fair, half-forgotten, long-neglected islands of the West Indies, but newly awakened from their slumber of long years, the market-places are the centres of whatever life and animation there are—be it under the pretentious arcades at Kingston in Jamaica; or in that strange old back street in the capital of Trinidad—the Earthly Paradise of Charles Kingsley—or in the funny, dilapidated old square at Scarborough in Robinson Crusoe's island of Tobago; or under the great palm-trees at Roseau in Dominica; or where the hardy *porteuses* come in from the country-side to the *halles* of Martinique and Guadeloupe; or in the full blaze of the sun at Basse Terre, St Kitts; or buzzing and chattering and laughing around the 'Green Man' in busy Bridgetown, Barbadoes.

In Havana, in South America, old Spain confronts us in the dirty, ill-savoured market-places; but old Spain amidst tropical surroundings, for these old centres were founded long ago by the 'Conquistadores,' and, despite the changes of centuries, are still distinguished by many of their old characteristics. Old houses look down upon them, successors of other old houses burned in the terrible times of Captain Teach, Blackbeard, Morgan, Lewis Scot, John Davis of Jamaica, François l'Olonaise, Captain Avary, Robert Kidd, and a score of other bold, merciless rascals, whose very names made ships' captains tremble in their shoes, and sent the women of the coast towns fleeing into the churches. The dark, bright-eyed faces are Spanish, save where the irrepressible 'black stain' shows itself; the language is that of old Spain—as much purer than that of modern Spain as is the French of Quebec purer than that of Paris. But for the rest—waving palms, deep blue sky, black patches of shade only accentuating the trembling white glare of light—in short, the tropics.

Even in prosaic North America there are market-places with a halo of romance about them. Boston State House, which in old days stood in the midst of Boston market-place, has seen many of the scenes which led up to the severance of Britain and her American colonies. The old 'Tory signs,' by which are meant the arms of Great Britain, were many times torn down and burned ere war was actually declared; and after the Declaration of Independence, were enthusiastically burned by the crowd. Lion and unicorn still remain, but nothing more. It was here, too, that occurred in 1770 the riot between the mob and the British soldiers known as 'the Boston Massacre,' five people being killed, and amongst them the first black champion of Liberty, Crispus Attuck. Faneuil Hall, hard by, also stood in a market-place, and is known as the 'Cradle of Liberty,' from the number of patriotic meetings held here under the patronage of America's greatest orators in the old stirring times.

Busy enough must old Salem market-place have been in the good times of the town's prosperity as a seaport, and also the scene of constant excitement when the persecution and execution of witches was in full swing. Through the market-place of placid, dreamy Concord town must have raced Earl Percy's red-coats upon that fateful April day, 1775, after the 'embattled farmers' had driven them from the bridge hard by, and the shot had been fired which was heard round the world. All through the New England States, indeed, there may yet be seen old-fashioned market-places each of which is more or less richly associated with the great deeds of these and preceding troublous years; and the fact that the names of most of the towns are the names of towns in old England by no means lessens the romance which comparatively a short time has woven about them.

The topic is well-nigh inexhaustible; but sufficient ground has been traversed to show that in every town with the smallest pretension to distinction or antiquity, the market-place will be found to be a central point of interest, if not for itself, for the associations which are linked with it.

S A F E D.

THE city of Safed is picturesquely situated high on the mountains of Naphtali. 'Ras-el-Jelil' is a name common among the natives (The head of Galilee). It is the highest city in the land, being 2700 feet above the Mediterranean, and 3380 feet above the Sea of Galilee. The castle-hill is the highest point to westward of the range of hills lying between the Jordan Valley and the Wadies Leimûn and 'Amûd. It is almost severed from its fellows by the Wady Hamra, where gardens are always green, watered by perennial springs. Of the once noble castle nothing remains but a confused heap, visible from afar. The city is built around this hill in the form of a horse-shoe, open to the north, spreading a little up the hill beyond the wady to the east; the 'toe' peering over a little mound southward, whence the whole extent of the Sea of Galilee is seen.

The view from the castle-hill is wide and varied, although not so extensive as that from the neighbouring height of Jebel Canaan. The road to Damascus winds through olive groves north-eastwards, and disappears between two rounded grassy hills that guard the descent to the Waters of Merom. On the hill-side to the left two little hamlets, 'Ain Bîreh and 'Ain-ez-Zaitûn, are huddled closely together beside the springs from which their names are taken, whose tiny silver streams glide under the shadow of fig, pomegranate, and vine that clothe the cultivated slopes below.

The mud walls of many villages marking the sites of ancient Galilean cities stud the landscape to the north and north-west. The old fortress of Gischala is only just hidden by the shoulder of a hill. Over against us to the west is the Jermûk range, cut off from the Safed hills by Wady Leimûn, or, as it is sometimes called, 'Wady-el-Tawahîn' (Valley of Mills), from the number of primitive mills with ivy-covered walls in the midst of brambly thickets, driven by the water

which flows all the year round in the bottom of the gorge. The rocky precipitous sides are in some parts not less than 1500 feet in height. Deep in the bosom of the valley is a curious intermittent spring, a constant source of wonderment to the natives, who call it the 'well of the demons.'

Jebel Jermúk, a finely-shaped mountain, the most northerly point of the range of that name, is the highest in Palestine, rising to a height of 4000 feet. On the gentle slope at its western base stands the ancient synagogue of Meiron, a sanctuary and place of pilgrimage to pious Jews all over the world. Strange tales are told of their doings at the great festival called the 'feast of the burning,' which is held here annually. It has been attempted to identify this place with the Meroz so bitterly mentioned in the song of Deborah. Tabor appears like a great dark beehive sitting at the corner of the magnificent plain of Esdraelon, which, beyond the uplands of Nazareth, stretches away to the base of Mount Carmel by the sea. Little Hermon, with the white-walled church on its north-western slope, marking the site of Nain; Gilboa, of tragic memory; and the mountains of Samaria beyond; Ebal and Gerizim raising their proud shoulders above their fellows, as if to boast of their ancient fame, are all visible from where we stand. From no point are the blue waters of Galilee seen to greater advantage. Deep set among surrounding hills, when Spring throws her mantle of dazzling green over the land, it is a veritable 'sapphire in the midst of emeralds.' The curiously arranged hills of Jaulán, volcanoes of the antique world, whose fires have been quenched for ages, lie eastward like huge dark masses rolled down from the majestic sides of Great Hermon. Beyond them we see the far-stretching plains of Haurán, the wealth of whose soil is not yet known to this generation, the giant forms of the Haurán mountains—Jebel-ed-Druse—looming up on the edge of the desert some eighty miles away. To the south-east lie the beautifully rounded, thickly-wooded hills of Gilead, yielding pasture and shelter to the flocks as of old; and when the air is perfectly clear, the grim heights of the mountains of Moab may be seen touching the sky away in the south.

The high and isolated position of Safed renders it comparatively secure from epidemics, notwithstanding the insanitary conditions that prevail. It is the most populous city in Northern Palestine; but anything like accuracy in estimating the numbers in this country is impossible. Of Moslems there may be from five to six thousand; Christians, between two and three hundred; Jews, from twelve to fifteen thousand. Two influences, acting in opposite directions, affect the calculation of the Jews. The census is given in by heads of communities, who are always more or less open to corruption. The returns made to the religious heads are sure to be as large as possible—that is, as large as they can with decency be made. The pious contributors of alms for the support of the *holy* Jews in Palestine regulate their subscriptions to some extent by the numbers to whom relief is to be given. If the numbers can be increased a little, there will be all the more for the *bona fide* recipients. Scrupulousness in securing advantage has not been a distinguishing mark

of the race since the day on which the artful Jacob deceived poor blind old Isaac. On the other hand, a tax is levied by the Government on all Ottoman subjects, at so much per head of population. The same interest which in the former case leads to increase, in this prompts to diminish the returns; the result, of course, is that there are no reliable statistics. The figures given may be taken as a fair approximation.

Education is at a low ebb. Education, properly so called, has indeed, until recently, been beyond the reach of the inhabitants. Among the Jews, the ability to read Hebrew, whether understanding it or not, is common enough, and many of them can write and reckon sufficiently to be able to manage a little shop; but there education stops. Only a few who have been out in the world on begging expeditions have any general information, and this they are by no means desirous to impart. Judaism resembles Romanism very closely in the manner in which the knowing ones try to keep the common people in ignorance. Among the Arabs, again, outside the Government circles, men who can read and write to any purpose are as scarce as snowdrifts in Palestine. The soil, which has been so little disturbed by cultivation, and is so thinly sown with wheat, affords magnificent opportunities for the growth of weeds and thistles. Weeds and thistles there are in abundance. The minds of Jew and Gentile are dominated by superstition. Their religious observances are cherished in proportion as they derive their sanction from superstition. This accounts largely for the bitterness of their bigotry. Many are the strange customs to which these people yield willing homage: what follows is a fair example.

The night of July 12, 1889, I spent in Safed. The moon rose with all her Syrian splendour, revealing beauties in the landscape unsuspected under the fierce glare of the sun. We watched her slow ascent into the cloudless heavens, and amused ourselves awhile trying to identify places around, wrapped in the clear amber of her beams. We had not long retired, when a loud crash resounded through the still night-air, followed by the clang of drums and an indescribable mixture of noises, increasing in volume every moment, produced by clashing tin cans and crockery, thumping upon boards with great sticks, firing of guns, the hoarse shoutings of men, the piercing voices of children, and, high above all, the shrill cry of the women—a peculiar cry, uttered in times of great excitement, whether of joy, of sorrow, or of anxiety. The din grew thicker, and the swelling sound floated away over intervening valleys, to echo among the moonlit hills, as one part of the city after another awoke to the seriousness of the occasion, to contribute its share to the general uproar and confusion. We came forth in haste to learn the cause of the alarm. The streets below us were filled by a wildly gesticulating mob, howling fiercely, with eyes of flame directed to the moon. Instinctively we looked towards the pale queen of night, and saw a little black notch, as it were, cut out of her bright circle. As I listened intently, by-and-by from the babel below I was able to distinguish clearly the words, shouted over and over again by every member of the crowd, with every variety of emphasis: 'Ya hoot dasher kamarna!

Ya hoot, minshan Ullah, dasher kamarna, ahsan ma natla' lak binnaboot!' Which may be rendered: 'O whale, let go our moon! O whale, for Ullah's sake, let go our moon, or else we'll come up to you with a club!' The look of terror on the faces of many showed that they only too firmly believed what the words indicated. Nothing was more certain to them than that a great whale from the vasty deep had risen from the dark waters to wipe out the glory of the night by making a supper of the moon. Children cry for the moon; but he had already gripped it in his awful jaws! Their only hope of saving her lay in their power to give the whale such a fright, that in trembling he should let fall his prey and flee for his own life.

As time passed and the dark shadow spread more and more over the face of the moon, their excitement grew almost to frenzy. The whale did not seem to care for their threats, and soon their beautiful moon would be gone beyond recall! Full three-quarters of the golden disc were obscured ere the shadow began to move off. Then gradually a jubilant note rose from amid the clangour. The shouting and the crashing and the clashing waxed merrier, as if a great weight were being lifted from the minds of the mob. They rushed hither and thither with quickening pace, hallooing, and vapouring their clubs: ere long the voice of laughter was heard, and at last, amid a burst of shouting, clashing of metal and staves, accompanied by a discharge of musketry that made the mountains echo again, the shadow passed from the rim, and the moon swam away gloriously in the translucent air. The crowd speedily left the streets; and soon the defenders of the moon were seen stretching themselves on their rugs on the roofs, each one perfectly satisfied that in rescuing their beloved moon from the jaws of the whale he had well earned a night's repose.

A native gentleman of more than average intelligence had joined us while we watched the strange scene. I asked how the custom could have arisen. He told me that 'once upon a time' a famous astronomer resided at the court of a certain great king. He was a wise man, and as such honoured of king and people. A man who has knowledge of 'the stars in their courses' is held to be wise in things far beyond the ken of ordinary mortals. His counsel was sought in affairs of the highest importance; and his skill in meeting difficulties and in giving suitable advice, combined with his well-known probity, secured for him not only the admiration but the confidence of all. From his observation of the movements of the heavenly bodies, he had calculated that on a given date there would be an eclipse of the moon. In a moment of unhappy inspiration he told the king what would take place. The king, like so many children of the Orient, was superstitious to a degree. He did not doubt that some potent evil spell had fallen upon his long-trusted friend; and that, were he left free, he would by his enchantments produce the effects he had prophesied, and perhaps blot the moon out of the heavens. Repressing all sentiment, as Eastern tyrants so easily can, he ordered his quondam counsellor to be put fast in prison and kept there until the time should pass and the event declare whether or

not he had spoken honestly. The astronomer went to prison, but waited confidently the hour and the event that should set him free. At length the appointed night came, and exactly at the hour indicated by the astronomer a bit seemed taken out of the moon. But, alas! the king slept; for any one to awaken him it would be certain death: if he did not see the eclipse, there would be no escape for the astronomer. Anxiety gave way to anguish as the shadow spread, covering almost the entire disc, and still the king slept. Suddenly rousing himself, the prisoner declared to his custodians that a great whale had come from the distant floods to swallow the moon, that unless the people made a fearful noise and frightened him away, they would never see their moon again. At once there arose on every hand a confused noise, and mingling of loud discordant voices such as had never been heard in the city before. As the sly astronomer had intended, it penetrated to the ear of the sleeping monarch, who forthwith strode out to learn the cause. With his distressed subjects he looked at the moon, and lo! it had happened according to the words of the wise man. He sent messengers hastily to the prison to fetch him forth; and when the moon escaped from the shadow and soared in beauty once more amid the blue, she looked down upon the astronomer restored to his honours, his royal master seeking by all means to efface from his worthy counsellor's mind every trace of his recent humiliation.

To the populace it was unnecessary to give further explanation; hence the belief so prevalent even up to the present time, that in the gloomy twilight of the unfathomable abyss there is a fearful monster, who, consumed with a desire to devour the moon, is ever ready for an opportunity to pounce upon it. An eclipse is simply an attempt on his part to give effect to his desire—an attempt in which he fails, simply because he is so well watched and shouted at and threatened that his courage fails him just when success is touched!

THE LAND OF THE SETTING SUN.

CHILDHOOD has many charms; but perhaps the most potent, to one who has long battled with the world, is its perfect innocence, and its implicit belief in those marvellous stories that the adult pours into its listening ear. Yet the child never marvels, nothing is too improbable, everything seems quite rational and proper. Fiction is unknown to him, and every word he hears sinks into his receptive mind as a truth. He stores these facts in his mind, and in a wonderful way at some future time he marshals them and sets them forth to the utter confusion of the adult. The child lives in an atmosphere of poetry; his imagination is most vivid. When the teller of the tale has quite forgotten it, the child's mind is busy dwelling on the wondrous scenes of that fairyland known only to childhood, where the elves and the pixies dance their revels the live-long day, and where the birds and beasts and fishes suffer no harm to come to the poor mortal who strays thither. Everything has a tongue in this land; the flowers have eyes to see, and they whisper more to each other than did the reeds

of King Midas. No evil exists in this far-off country; the child knows none; he has not yet eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; everything is good, and everybody is actuated by good motives. Alas that such pretty notions should one day have to be dispelled!

It is many years ago now, that my little sister and I set out together for the Land of the Setting Sun. The beautiful golden clouds had gathered in the west; in the glorious perspective, waves were rolling in upon a glittering blue lake, girt with trees of burning silver and gold. Fairy palaces arose, whose amber-coloured turrets shone with a wonderful and alluring brilliancy. I longed to tread those paths and to wander adown those sunny slopes by the blue and shimmering lake. It was to this beautiful country that my mother had gone—so nurse had told me—and I longed to see her whom I had never known. So I secretly determined to journey thither. My little sister I loved dearly, and could not think of parting from her, so, putting her hat on and wrapping her cloak around her, we were ready to start. How surprised would our mother be when she saw us coming in at those gates that nurse told us of; she would know us at once, of course. But how should we know her—our dear mother? Among all the beautiful ladies who would greet us, how could we distinguish her? I hastily ran and took down a miniature which was hanging in my bedroom, and upon which I used to cast my eyes when I awoke in the morning. My mother—they told me—was like that—more beautiful. This likeness I put in my pocket; and around my sister's neck I suspended with a ribbon a locket containing a circlet of golden hair—our mother's. Telling her we were going a long journey to see our mother, and pointing to the beautiful golden west, the land we had both heard of and both longed to reach, I took her hand in mine, and thus, hand in hand, we took our way down the garden walk to the Land of the Setting Sun.

The nightingales sang to us as we passed up a winding lane that led into the open country and the moorlands. By the road-side grew clumps of fir-trees, and through their branches streamed the rays of the sun, casting a strange light into the depths of the stilly copses. The sinking sun from behind the hill-tops lit up the whole country-side beyond the meadows and across the slopes. Never since have I seen such a sunset. It was one of those quiet evenings in June when the whole sky grows lurid at sundown, when the day is slow to die, and when twilight lingers long before fading into night. The scene had changed somewhat; the blue lake was no longer visible, it was hidden by tall gray mountains, at the foot of which stretched beautiful fields of emerald green. The palaces had vanished, and in their place grim castles frowned from the tops of craggy heights. Across the western sky stretched a red chain of clouds; but in the east, black and threatening was the aspect and dark 'messengers' scudded across to the west. The wind began to grow cool, and there was an ominous rustle in the leaves upon the trees. The birds were now silent. Darkness was fast overtaking the daylight; and travelling with it, under its shadow, seemed to be a small tempest, such as often succeeds a more than usually bril-

liant sunset. Large spots of cold rain began to fall, and I wrapped my little sister's cloak closer around her as we hurried onwards. We were on a wide-spreading moor, and still we went on till the night closed in. The rain now began to fall faster, and the wind made a low sobbing noise as it swept by us. We grew afraid as we hurried past gaunt trees which seemed to assume gruesome shapes. Then in the darkness we could discern twinkling lights, and at last we came up to one, which, being in the turf, we took for a fairy light; but, alas! no fairy answered us when we called; and I remember wondering why the rain did not put the tiny lamp out. Then my little sister began to cry most bitterly, and placing my arms around her, I found that her cloak was wet through, and I had not noticed till then that my jacket was the same.

We struggled on. I only remember how the night grew blacker, and that finally we came to a big house; and how, after pulling a long handle hanging at the portal, a terrible clanging of bells and barking of dogs and flashing of lights ensued. What followed I can but faintly remember. I have a dim recollection of seeing a beautiful lady that I thought must be my mother, and of sitting before a blazing fire; then I must have fallen asleep. When I awoke, it was broad daylight, but the room seemed strangely different from my own, and yet, there, hanging on the wall before me, was my mother's miniature. In the night I had been dreaming. I dreamt that soft and sweet voices were calling to me, and kind hands were gently smoothing my burning forehead. I was thirsty. My mother cooled my lips, and her voice lulled me to sleep again. But could I be awake? By the window grew honeysuckle, that I never had known was there; and standing against the blue sky was a red farmhouse that I had never seen before. I shut my eyes to see if it were all real; but on opening them again, I saw the beautiful lady bending over me, and I called her 'mother,' and asked where I was; but, kissing me, she bade me be very quiet, and told me that I had been very ill, and that soon I should be well again.

Day followed day, and I would watch the sky grow blue and the clouds sail across; and the song of the birds in the orchard came in with the soft balmy air at my window. I would talk to the lady, and for hours she would sit with loving face and listen to my prattle. I told her how my little sister and I had started for the Land of the Setting Sun; and when I asked her where my sister was, she told me that when I was stronger she would tell me; and I said I was strong now; and bending over me and covering me with kisses, she told me that my dear little sister had gone to the land where our mother was—that I might go to them, but that they could never come to me; and in telling me she cried; and I cried too, for I felt how lonely my path in life would be without my mother and sister; but putting her arms around me, the lady told me that some day I should join them in the Land of the Setting Sun, in the land that knows no night.

I am old now; many sunsets have come and gone since then. The lady who sat by my bedside, and who afterwards became to me more than a second mother, is no more of this land, but

he obtains a new outlook into life. Previously, he has been concerned with the miniature world of school, and looked at the greater world only with the eyes of a school-boy. But now, entering a business or a profession, he enters into a larger life, and begins to look about him with an air of deeper inquiry. And the more he reads of contemporary literature the worse does he become, for the air is thick with controversy; nothing is too sacred to be contradicted, and the spirit of 'sweet reasonableness' seems to be dead.

The difficulty of finding something to read in an age when half the world is engaged in writing books for the other half to read is not one of quantity but of quality, so that the question, 'What shall I read?' inevitably suggests the parallel query, 'What shall I not read?' The wisdom of writing, according to Mr Lowell, consists in knowing what to leave in the inkpot. Applying the same truth to reading, it may be said that he who reads most wisely is the reader who knows what books to leave uncut. If the number of books extant in the time of Solomon was so great as to call for comment, Carlyle has far more reason to bewail the prolific press of to-day: 'Still, undaunted, rushes on the great array of Publications, unpausing, to their final home; and still Oblivion, like the grave, cries "Give."'

The awful power of the omnipotent daily paper as an engine for good or evil can hardly be over-estimated. Nine men out of ten, though they will not admit it, have an almost superstitious veneration for anything in print. The City man, at lunch with a friend, delivers himself, not of his own opinions, but of those of the daily paper which he has swallowed with his breakfast, so that the political argument is not Jones *v.* Brown, but the leader-writer of the 'Daily Slasher' *v.* him of the 'Morning Scribbler.' In a very busy age, it is doubtless a great saving of time and trouble to buy an opinion ready made for a penny; but the habit is fatal to the faculty of pronouncing an independent judgment. As a matter of fact, however, since the establishment of free libraries, there has been a manifest improvement in the class of books read. Librarians tell us that history is more in demand, and that the best books are gradually superseding in the estimation of the people those which might be considered of a less favourable tendency. This is good news; but there is still much room for improvement, and only in proportion as we realise our individual responsibility in this matter, and act up to it, shall we be able to help to raise the tone of the public taste; for it is certain that degrading and vicious literature is supplied in answer to a demand, although it is probably just as sadly certain that writers and purveyors, finding that such a demand exists, do not hesitate to lead the way where formerly they cautiously felt it.

In choice of reading there are two cardinal principles which should ever be borne in mind—first, that it is necessary to keep fairly abreast of the principal thought and news of the time; and second, that it is essential, in order to a right estimate of present events, to cull at any rate some of the choicest flowers of the literature and history of the past. To keep fairly apace with

general thought and news, newspapers and magazines are indispensable, though too much attention cannot be paid to Emerson's advice in this regard—to learn the art of quickly and profitably assimilating their contents. To be for ever wrapped up in a newspaper, and to depend entirely on it for mental sustenance, is truly a humiliating position for people 'heirs of all the ages, foremost in the ranks of time;' but it is a common one, for there are thousands who, never reading anything else, are content to let their intellects starve in the midst of plenty. It is indeed this very plenty which is so embarrassing. The majority of people who read at all, read too much and think too little, falling into the error to which Schopenhauer alludes when he says that the safest way of having no thoughts of our own is to take up a book every moment we have nothing to do.

The second principle that has been indicated—that it is necessary to obtain a well-proportioned view of present events—involves the reading of history, biography, philosophy, and fiction. It is a striking comment on the prevalence of popular ignorance that a sensational murder will provide a month's topic for conversation, while the publication of a profound work which is the result of long years of toil will pass unheeded. A people educated by reading that which would give them a just sense of proportion could not fail to discriminate between the relative importance of the two events. For this purpose English literature is admirably adapted, Lord Macaulay averring that there is in the English classics a body of teaching power which the literatures of Greece and Rome cannot rival. 'No people has on the whole written so much and so well,' says the Rev. Stopford Brooke; 'no people can point to so long and so splendid a train of poets and prose writers.' It is no part of our intention to presume to mention 'the best hundred books,' nor to disparage unduly the works of modern authors; but when there is so much that is standard in our language, so much that has stood the tests of time and trial, it is impossible not to sympathise with that bookseller, justly proud of his conservative tendencies in the matter of literature, who replied, on being asked for a copy of a modern theological novel, 'I sell nothing which time has not mellowed.'

But, though nobody has a right to prescribe the books for another to read, a direction may be indicated which experience has proved it is desirable to take. That direction may be briefly pointed out as the one which contains the gems of our language. There are many of them—quite enough to occupy the time which the average man is able to devote to reading. When he has read these he will have a right to explore the bypaths of literature; but only when he has exhausted the first class should he begin to dabble in the second, third, or tenth rate. In fact, once this taste for the best is cultivated, any other than it will pall upon the ear and fail to satisfy the mind. The reader becomes intuitively aware when a master spirit is talking to him, for he feels that what he is reading bears an intimate relation to universal humanity as well as to himself, and therefore possesses a vital interest for all. This is the true test of whether a book is merely parochial or belongs to the wide

republic of letters. No matter how exalted or how humble the theme, if it appeals to our common humanity it is literature in the true sense. The *Compleat Angler*, with its freshness and simplicity and overflowing love of Nature, and the *Natural History of Selborne*, wherein, says Carlyle, 'Parson White has copied a little sentence or two faithfully from the Inspired Volume of Nature,' are as truly literature as the sublimities of Milton's cathedral diapason.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XVII.—THE HISTORY OF A GREAT SUSPICION.

To Isabel the early days of her father's sojourn with her were days of comparative rest and peace. A subdued zephyr of excitement, indeed, breathed through them, but they were devoid of anxiety and incident. Her father had been brought by Mr Doughty, as she had arranged, and he had settled down with her readily and cheerfully. The first thing he had done on entering her sitting-room had been to run his eye over her book-shelves, and the next had been to sit down in her easy-chair with a book that was new to him; and thus he had continued. She had found a lodging for the faithful Doughty a door or two off, and he hung about the chief—in attendance or on guard—while she was absent at school. The first two days being Saturday and Sunday, she was able to be present herself pretty constantly. On Sunday evening she went to Rutland Gate—it had been arranged that she should dine there on Sundays, and she feared that if she intermitted the habit, awkward questions might be asked—but she went with an even mind; for she left Mr Ainsworth in conversation with her father, on the understanding that he would stay till her return. It was not, then, till Monday that her father had occasion to note her absence during the greater part of the day. On her return from school she found him disturbed.

'My dear child,' said he, before she had well entered, 'I cannot permit this! Alexander has told me that you go out teaching in a school every day: you mustn't do it any more, my dear!—You understand, my dear,' said he, taking her hands and looking tenderly on her, 'that your father is going to provide for you: it is but right and proper that he should: it is a duty and a pleasure he has neglected too long.'

'You are very good, father,' said she; and for the moment she was as grateful as if his desire had been carried into act; 'but I cannot give my teaching up at a moment's notice. I must go on for another term. You understand—don't you?'

He understood, and he assented; and thus she temporised.

But from that hour he began to be full of schemes of work. He discussed them with his daughter, he discussed them with Alexander, and he discussed them with Alan Ainsworth—discussed them with such eloquence, subtlety, and completeness, that it seemed as if he must sit

down at once in the heat of his subjects—but he always put off the writing till 'to-morrow.'

'There now,' said Ainsworth one evening, when he was wrought to as great a pitch of interest as the expositor himself—'there you have material for at least three first-rate articles! Set to and write them, and I pledge myself to find a place for them. Make a start to-night.'

'Let us talk the subject out a little more thoroughly first,' said Mr Raynor: 'I'll make a good beginning early in the morning when I'm alone.'

Thus the days slipped away; but Isabel, at least, was not disappointed, for she had built no hopes on her father's promises of performance. Her father's intentions were always of the best and noblest, and it was but a vice of the body—she told herself—become an iron habit that he could not give them effect. He was, of course, too clever a man not to be aware of his own weaknesses, and he had still too much conscience not to be bitten sometimes with a rage against himself. His rage was commonly impotent, but it was honestly felt. But in saying that much I am anticipating somewhat; for all the evidence he gave of self-contumely in those early days, when he was still fresh to the change in his surroundings, was in a certain conversation with his daughter.

'I am,' said he suddenly, 'a worthless wretch, my dear! I have no will. Or, at least, I should say I have a will, but have lost the force to make it work. I do not mean to accuse myself of absolute idleness—no, no; that would not be fair to myself; and I have reasons enough for self-reproach without adding imaginary ones—but in all things that concern my moral feelings I have sunk into a strange apathy and cowardice. During all the years I have neglected you, my child, I have been filled with shame of myself; God knows not a day has passed but the thought of you has gnawed at my heart—and yet somehow I could do nothing! It seems amazing and preposterous, but there it is!'

'You are morbid, father dear,' said she. 'You are not strong; but you will get stronger. Wait, and your will-power will come back.'

All these things Isabel laid up and pondered in her heart, with the result that she pitied him with the ungrudging, infinite pity of a strong woman, and was resolved more than ever to protect him with all the resources of her love. It was well for him that she was thus powerfully drawn to him early, for the bond that bound them was soon to be sorely tried. The trial came about in this wise.

Uncle Harry had been more disappointed than he could have imagined by Isabel's refusal to live with him. He admitted to himself that she had been quite sweet and reasonable about it, and that he really had no grievance; but yet he had been so long used to command and to be obeyed, to say to this man 'Come,' and to that 'Go,' and to find action follow in unhesitating consequence, that it chafed him to find the inclination and purpose of another running counter to his plans. So he brooded on her refusal, and turned over and over her reasons for it. Moreover, his many years' intercourse with wily Asiatics had made him very suspicious, and somewhat prone to put two and two together to make five. Isabel

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had made two or three singular admissions: she would have accepted his offer if it had been made a week—or even three days—before; she had in that time taken upon herself, or incurred, some responsibility of which she could not speak, and which, therefore, must be open to objection—and she clearly knew some one who—in plain words—was given to drink. What wonder is it that these strange confessions should coalesce in Uncle Harry's mind, accustomed to examine and deduce, into one coherent statement? Isabel had become entangled closely with some dissipated ne'er-do-well, whom, in her generosity, she was about to marry to save him from his vice! That is too common an event with women not to have seemed plausible even in the case of Isabel. Having got thus far, Uncle Harry became alarmed, and could not forbear to communicate his fears to Mr Suffield.

'It's rank nonsense, Harry!' said Suffield. 'As I've told you before, you've lived among those black fellows so long that you're as suspicious as a Justice o' the Peace!'

'It may be rank, George,' said Uncle Harry; 'but it's not nonsense. Look at the way the girl has lived the last few years!—having the complete control of her own movements, and making what acquaintances she liked! Do you know what friends and acquaintances she may have made? No, of course you don't.'

'I've never heard her speak of any, and she has always been a frank, open girl, Harry. The only young man she knows and cares about, besides George, so far as I'm aware, is Alan Ainsworth—and, of course, he's out of this question.'

'When did he tell you,' asked Uncle Harry, 'that he had come up to London?—come up earlier than he had intended? A day or two before my talk with Isabel—wasn't it? Her "three days" would just cover that! That's a curious thing.'

'Bless my soul!' exclaimed Mr Suffield. 'You actually imagine that Alan can be the man? But you don't know him! Harry, you're no better than a Grand Inquisitor!'

'I'm only inquisitorial,' said Uncle Harry, slightly huffed, 'in the interest of my niece and yours; and it might have been better if you had been more inquisitorial long ago.' And he marched into the garden, where his tent was permanently pitched.

The excellent Suffield sat confused. If these things could be, he would have to rearrange all his preconceptions of both men and women. He wondered, and then he began to doubt; and when an honest creature like him once begins to doubt, he doubts in a thorough, straightforward way characteristic only of himself, and by no means to be reckoned with. He turned immediately and wrote to Ainsworth that he would like to see him as soon as possible on an important matter. Ainsworth, of course, came on the summons, but yet Suffield had had time to go over his doubts, over and over again, till he had trodden them down almost as hard and fixed as beliefs. He received his young friend privately in the library.

'I call this my snuggery,' said he, in a kind of parenthetical apology; 'though there's nothing very snug about it—is there? I smoke a pipe

here sometimes; but I don't seem to mix well wi' the wiggid old chaps on the wall there'—indicating certain severe portraits of past politicians and statesmen of the house of Padiham.—'They don't know me, and they appear to think I'm taking a deuce of a liberty in trying to make myself comfortable in their company, though the Lord knows I pay enough for it. Yes; I smoke a pipe, and make my head swell wi' solid information out of Blue-books; but I'd rather be sitting by my own fireside wi' a long clay, having a good talk, as we used to do.—But sit you down, Alan, my lad, and never mind the old chaps. By the way, my niece, Isabel, and you seemed to hit it off pretty well last time I saw you together. Have you seen anything of her, by chance, since you have come up to London?'

'Yes,' answered Ainsworth, somewhat embarrassed; 'I happened to meet her in the street.' He thought that in saying so much he was admitting as much as was fair to Isabel.

'Well,' said Suffield, after having mentally noted the admission. 'And how are things going with you? Very busy, eh?'

He moved uneasily about the room while he spoke, and kept his eyes off Ainsworth.

'Yes, Mr Suffield,' answered the young man, 'I'm fairly busy; and things are going on as well as can be expected, as the doctors say.'

'You find no difficulty about settling down in London, I suppose? If you find any difficulty, come to me, you know—come to me. I'll be always glad to do whatever I can for you, as I've told you.'

'You're very good, Mr Suffield,' said Ainsworth; 'and I assure you, if I were in any difficulty, or if ever I may be in a difficulty, there is no one to whom I would more unreservedly come than you.'

'I'm glad to hear you say that, my lad,' said Suffield, and considered his young friend's countenance a moment to observe signs of a rising confession. But he saw none. 'You see, my lad,' he continued, 'London's a place that makes a young fellow live always on the strain, like a man balancing himself on a tight-rope, or like a man I saw once on the Spa at Scarborough that walked on a globe and worked himself and his globe up and up on a narrow gangway, twisting round and round to the top of a high pole. A young man like you that has to put his head into his work gets excited, gets over-excited, maybe, wi' working overtime, till human nature won't stand it—unless the man's a horse—and says "No, no! Let me rest a bit." But the young man won't let his nature rest; he whips it up, and jogs it on wi' stimulants. And then he comes a cropper, and is done for.' Again he considered his young friend, but still he saw no signs of compunction, or even of self-consciousness. 'I once knew,' he continued, 'a clever lad like yourself—a dear friend he was, and a kind of relation, which you are not, not yet.' Upon that Ainsworth blushed, and Suffield thought: Aha! there's something here! 'He was in the same line of work as you are in,' said Suffield. 'He was a very promising lad, and was getting on quite swimmingly, when suddenly he went under.'

'Dead?' asked Ainsworth, interested.

'No, my lad. Shipwrecked!—Lost—lost! It

came suddenly to us, but not to him! He knew for a long time, though we didn't, that he was ruining himself and his family with his stimulant.—not drink, but something quite as fatal to him!

'What? Not opium?'

'Yes, my lad. Opium it was.'

FLAX-CULTURE IN SCOTLAND.

In following out the treatment of this subject, the writer will avoid all theories that have not been tested by facts and experience, and will endeavour to explain the most approved method of flax-culture as briefly as is consistent with an intelligent understanding of the process.

The flax-plant, of which there are many varieties, is cultivated in nearly every country in the world; but the common species with which we are acquainted, and which is raised specially for the fibre, is indigenous to Europe, Egypt, and part of Asia.

Our principal supply of the raw material is imported from Russia, where the plant has long been, and still is, cultivated more extensively than in any other country in the world; but there the culture of the crop and preparation of the fibre receive less care and attention than in any other flax-producing country. This neglect may be accounted for by the immense tracts under crop, and also by much thinner sowing than is practised in other countries, in order to give the plant greater strength and more numerous branches, to prevent its being laid during the violent thunder-storms that prevail about the time it is in flower. The result of this treatment, however, is a coarse fibre, and also a very much inferior yield to that grown thicker, and under more favourable circumstances of soil and attention in its early stages.

Germany, Austria, and France follow Russia as flax-producing countries, and in each of these an average area of over two hundred thousand acres is kept under this crop. In Holland, flax is grown principally for the seed, and the planting and growth of the crop, as well as the time of pulling, is regulated for this purpose. By properly maturing the seed, the quality of the fibre is injured, and renders the subsequent process more difficult; but the Dutch farmers are amply remunerated by the high price obtained for the seed, which has for agricultural purposes a world-wide fame, and is chiefly sown in Britain, although Riga seed is also used, and preferred by some growers as being more hardy.

It is Belgium, however, to which we must turn to see flax in the highest state of cultivation, where nothing is neglected that can in any measure improve the quantity, and more especially the quality, of the crop. Here proper rotation of crops, superior tillage, and liberal manuring of the land, are attended to in a manner not seen elsewhere, and to this the careful, plodding Belgian farmers owe their success in raising other crops as well as flax, and which has earned for them the reputation they enjoy of being the most successful agriculturists in the world.

In Flanders especially, the crop under our notice receives the most careful attention. The

fields resemble well-kept gardens, and here the very finest flax is produced, such as is employed in the manufacture of the famous Brussels lace. It brings in the market one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds, and often as high as two hundred pounds, per ton; indeed, sometimes exceeding in value the land on which it was produced, and so exceedingly fine that a Belgian pound of the raw material has been spun into a thread four thousand miles long.

Flax-growing has spread more in Ireland than in any other part of the country, notwithstanding that the soil of England and Scotland is almost, if not altogether as suitable for its cultivation. This can only be accounted for by the numerous small holdings, and the perseverance of the farmers with the crop, which has caused scutching-mills to spring up to deal with the straw and prepare the fibre for the market. About eighty thousand acres of flax were grown in Ireland last year, producing a fair yield; but the quantity of fibre obtained from this acreage is not sufficient for one-fourth of the Belfast manufacturers alone.

We have already referred to the very primitive mode of culture in Russia, and the consequent poor return. The inference plainly is, that the more intelligent Scotch farmer, with richer land and better appliances, would rear superior crops both in quantity and quality. In proof of this, Irish flax brings in the market nearly double that of Russian; and a quantity of dressed flax grown recently in Fifeshire brought ninety pounds per ton.

In addition to these more favourable conditions attending the realisation of the crop at the present time, a new industry has arisen within the last few years which utilises the fibre in the straw. It may not be generally known that a company now exists in Dundee which will purchase the crop from the farmer as it comes from the field, delivered at the nearest railway station. This method of disposal gives a much quicker return, if not so large results as from preparing the fibre for the spinner, and certainly removes the objection raised by some who would grow flax but are uncertain of a market, and afraid of the difficulties attending the retting process. Until a few years ago not a single field of this crop had been reared in Fifeshire for a generation, when Messrs John Fergus & Co., of Leslie, and some Dundee spinners, turned their attention to the subject; and through their enterprise in supplying seed, and also in renting land for the purpose, they have succeeded in inducing farmers throughout the country to plant in small patches during the years 1887-88 an aggregate of about one hundred acres.

With the farmer, of course the main consideration in making a departure from the usual rotation, and introducing a crop that entails more labour than those to which they have been so long accustomed, is the vital question, How will it pay? Now, this query can be put in fewer words than its answer; as not many farmers keep separate accounts of each crop they cultivate, and among the many Irish growers, scarcely a third plant over two acres, and even those have very little to show in the way of book-keeping. The profits of flax-growing vary considerably, more so, perhaps, than any other crop; climatic influ-

ences, exposure, value of land, price of labour, and other factors enter in and disturb any calculation, however carefully made. We are, however, in possession of some facts which will help us to a certain extent in answering the question, and although the returns for the different years show a wide variation, still something like an average may be arrived at. From the causes above mentioned, wide fluctuations must be looked for, so that even a fairly struck average may be to some extent misleading, as adverse circumstances have a tendency in some years to become cumulative. The correct way, therefore, of presenting the matter is to give a few examples showing the experience of others, and allow growers to draw their own conclusions.

The average cost of producing an acre of flax in Ireland is between eight and nine pounds, including the expenses of retting and scutching; but there, it must be remembered, the cost of labour is less than with us, and further, there the small farmer and his family frequently work their own land, and employ few if any assistants. The return of an English farmer gives the total expenses connected with growing an acre of flax as eight pounds, which realised him as taken off the field the sum of twelve pounds. Something like this return was experienced by most of the growers in Fifeshire.

An experiment was made in Aberdeenshire on two acres of very stiff clay land with an easterly exposure. This test as to the profitable nature of the crop was considered a most severe one, the season being so unfavourable, and the land of the very poorest description. The total cost of production, including rent and twenty loads of manure, was £12, 13s., and the crop was sold green at the nearest railway station—that of Udney—to a Dundee merchant for £20, leaving the very fair profit of £3, 13s. 6d. per acre.

In 1886, '87, and '88, experiments were made by a well-known firm of bleachers near Perth, with the result of an average return for the three years of over £6 per acre. This result, we think, needs no comment, further than to say if it is not sufficient to induce farmers to give the crop a fair trial by sowing a few acres, then the agricultural depression of which we hear so much cannot be so severe as is generally supposed.

We are satisfied that even a higher return would have been got had the fibre been prepared for the spinner, being supported in this view by some returns from Ireland, showing a gross income of from thirty to forty pounds per acre. Our object, however, is to prove that the processes of retting and scutching, with their attending difficulties, may be dispensed with, and a very fair return obtained by disposal of the crop in the manner above indicated.

There is scarcely another plant which acclimatises itself so readily under different conditions and in so many countries as flax. Speaking generally, it will thrive in the greatest variety of soils, but, like most other plants, 'The better the land the better the crop.' Any land not too sandy, or peaty, or of a cold, stiff, clay nature, will suit flax; but the best yield will be obtained from a good deep loamy soil.

Much of the success of a flax crop depends on the selection of seed, and growers cannot be too careful in this respect. To ensure a good result,

the very best seed procurable must be got irrespective of price. With beginners, seed-buying must be a great measure be a matter of good faith. Seedsmen only should be dealt with whose word and recommendation can be depended upon. Although a knowledge of quality can only be gained by experience, the germinating power can be tested before sowing by planting one hundred seeds in a pot and watching results.

Dutch or Russian seed, or, better still, a strain through both countries, is the most suitable of imported kinds. Some of the best crops, however, have been raised from home-grown seed, which, we think, should be more used than it is for this purpose, being certainly better adapted than that grown in foreign countries under so different conditions of soil and climate; besides, the best qualities are not always exported by flax-growing countries, but reserved for home use. The Irish Flax Company strongly advocates its own matured seed, and some tested lately showed a maximum germinating power of one hundred per cent., which has never yet been reached in any imported kinds. Besides, the careful saving of seed either for sowing or feeding purposes largely increases the return to the grower.

The field in which flax is to be sown is better to be ploughed in autumn, after a liberal supply of farm manure, and allowed to remain in the furrows all winter, exposed to the pulverising influence of frost. In spring it should be ploughed not too deeply across the furrows, then harrowed and rolled till the soil is fine, as flax must have a firm seed-bed. The best time for sowing is from the middle to the end of April, when all danger of frost is past; and splendid crops have resulted from sowing the first week of May. Not less than two and a half bushels of seed should be sown per acre, and on poor land this quantity may be increased with advantage. The seed should be scattered as regularly as possible, then lightly harrowed and rolled. When the plants are a few inches high, the crop should be carefully weeded by children or women, on hands and knees, and against the wind, as likely to do less damage to the young plants. The operation should be performed when the ground is damp, or a prospect of rain, which gives the plants a better chance of recovering than in very dry weather. When the ground is very clean, and labour for this purpose difficult to procure, weeding may be dispensed with, although it is always beneficial, and has sometimes to be repeated.

When the straw begins to turn yellow, the foliage to droop, and the seeds to change to a pale brown colour, is the proper time to pull the flax. In pulling, the same lengths of straw should be kept as nearly as possible together, and tied in small sheaves five or six inches through. This facilitates the after-process; and if rippling is intended, the bundles do not require to be opened out. The sheaves should now be set up in the field on their root-ends, like corn stooks, to winnow, after which it is ready for the market, if the grower wishes to realise the crop at this stage.

Flax can be thrashed much in the manner of grain, after being well dried, but greater care is required, so as not to break the straw, and thus injure the fibre. Sometimes it is put through

rollers properly adjusted, which pulls off the seed-bolls. More frequently, however, the seed is removed by a process called rippling, and being the most approved method, we shall shortly describe it. The small sheaves are repeatedly pulled with a quick motion through an upright iron comb with round teeth, about one foot high and an inch apart, and with blunt, tapering points. This comb should be firmly fixed to a frame; and on the opposite side to the worker a large box should be placed, or a sheet spread on the ground, to receive the seed-vessels as they fall. The bolls, after being thoroughly dried, can be put through the mill and cleaned.

Experience has shown that the yield of fibre is increased, and the seed also improved, by allowing both to remain in the straw over the winter months, and the rippling delayed till the seed is required for next year's sowing, and the retting until the warm weather has set in.

The next and last operation to be described is that of retting, or rotting off the straw, and is by far the most important and delicate the crop undergoes. On the proper manipulation of the flax at this stage depends to a considerable extent the quality of the fibre. There is no difficulty, however, that may not be overcome with care and attention; and, as has been already noticed, this method of realisation being the most profitable, amply repays the labour expended. The retting process is generally adopted by growers both in Ireland and on the Continent.

Water for retting is better to be exposed to the sun for several weeks before the flax is put in, unless soft or rain water can be had, which is the most suitable. Water containing a large proportion of lime or iron is unsuitable, but any water in which soap will not curdle is soft enough for steeping flax. When slowly-running water is conveniently near, it may be used to advantage. Retting is often performed in the rivers of Belgium and Holland, where the flax is steeped in crates or perforated boxes.

When running water is not obtainable, pits should be dug about forty feet long, eight feet wide, and four feet deep, this being the size capable of containing the average growth of one acre. These pits should be lined with clay and made water-tight.

The flax is then closely packed, root-end downwards, although flax has been retted successfully in any position. A row of sheaves may be placed on the top, laying the bundles flat. On the top, boards weighted with stones should be placed, to keep the sheaves under, and the whole then covered with water to the depth of a few inches above the boards.

At first, the flax will have a tendency to rise as fermentation begins, and stones will have to be added to keep it down; afterwards, the load must be diminished, as the flax will settle down of itself, and this is one of the first signs that the retting process is approaching completion. During the summer months, a week to ten days is sufficient to rot the straw; but as the time varies with the temperature and nature of the water, great care has to be exercised.

A more simple form of retting called grass or dew retting is adopted in some parts of the Continent, and being a safer as well as an easier process for beginners, we give details. Instead of

being put in pits, as described above, the flax is spread out thinly on the grass until the fibre parts readily from the woody stem as given above. As can be understood, this is a more lengthened process, and requires about a month's exposure to sun, rains, and dew before being ready for scutching. This style of retting is often adopted when grass fields are available for the purpose, and is very prevalent in Russia, which has been already referred to as the greatest flax-producing country in the world.

For the benefit of those who do not care to undertake the retting operation, a market, as already stated, now exists for the straw in its natural condition. Although not in a position to give details of the process, we understand the straw is treated mechanically by a machine recently invented for this purpose, details of which will soon be made public. From inquiries among the growers in Fifeshire, we learn that fully three-fourths of the crop during the years referred to was disposed of in this manner in Dundee at prices which left a better result than any other crop on the farm.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

CHAPTER III.

NEXT afternoon, Mr Godfrey, in the company of Mr Purvey, was strolling towards the mysterious wooden enclosure. At the outer door Mr Purvey knocked. Within, there was the sound of a machine stealthily and softly grinding and gnawing like a monstrous rat. Mr Purvey repeated his knock more loudly, and the machine, as if alarmed, ceased its gnawing, just as a rat might. Presently there came the sound of a leisurely footstep within; the lock was undone, and two bolts withdrawn, and the door was opened about two inches. Through the opening a man peered, first with one eye, and then—as if to enjoy a variety of view—with the other.

'It's me, John,' said Mr Purvey, with his fullest and richest roll of complacency.

'Oh!' said the laconic John, and opened the door, with a suspicious look fixed upon Mr Purvey's companion.

'I've brought a scientific expert, John,' said Purvey with a familiar smile, 'to see what you're about.'

John locked and bolted the door again behind them.

'No wonder,' said Mr Godfrey, 'that Mr Langland said you were very secret about it!'

'Did he say that to you?' asked Mr Purvey, with a self-gratulatory smile.

'No; to my friend, Colonel Swetenham.'

They entered the shanty, where was another man, of a more responsible and less sulky demeanour than John. For some time Mr Godfrey was engrossed with the things shown and the explanations given by that man, and Mr Purvey was engrossed with Mr Godfrey's attention. Mr Godfrey said little: he looked, listened, and examined. He was especially interested in lumps of dirt, crushed rock, chalk, and what not, that reposed on a long bench. They were shaped like sections of the heart or pith of an enormous cane—some were black as the blocks of charcoal of a common filter—and they bore tickets labelled

'500 feet,' '750 feet,' '1000 feet,' and so on. His examination over, Mr Godfrey turned to leave without saying a word, and Mr Purvey went out with his eyes on the ground, followed by Godfrey.

'Well, what do you think?' asked Mr Purvey at once, when they were again outside the enclosure, returning towards the concrete villa.

'It is not very promising,' said Mr Godfrey, 'so far as it has gone. But I should judge that you have just hit upon the thin end, or tongue, of a measure.'

'Just what I thought myself,' said Mr Purvey.

'And I think,' continued Mr Godfrey—'though I must give a good look round before giving a decided opinion—that the measure lies that way'—indicating the Fairfield Farm—'and not this.'

'That is your opinion,' said Purvey, stopping again and looking on Mr Godfrey with a wistful puckering of his brows—'subject, of course, to revision. I suppose you don't know whose land that is? It is not mine. It is Mr Langland's, or at least his daughter's.'

'That seems a pity, doesn't it?' said Mr Godfrey, and he looked as if he anxiously awaited the elder's reply.

'Well,' said Mr Purvey, fixing his eye on the horizon and balancing his statement with his forefinger, 'it is—and it isn't. I should have liked, of course, if it had proved to be on my side; but I haven't reckoned on it—never do reckon on things of a speculative nature—and I shall be well pleased if it proves to be on Mr Langland's side. It has been, indeed, with a view to the probability of that result that I have made the experiment near the border-line, for I thought it might chance to benefit Mr Langland as much as myself; and if it benefits only him and not myself, I shall not complain. He is a worthy gentleman,' he continued, bringing his eye to bear on the young man; 'but he has not the slightest capacity for business, and therefore he has a very muddled view of the dispensations of Providence. If this should suggest to him that the richest bounties of the Giver of all Good are not on the surface, I shall be glad.'

'You would like him to understand, I suppose,' said the young man, in a kind of thoughtful surprise, 'that Providence is conducted on strictly business principles?'

'Well,' said the old man, with a certain irritation, which he tried to rub from his nose with his ever-active forefinger, 'I don't quite approve of that way of putting it.' He said nothing more, but walked on again with his hands behind him; and after a pause, Mr Godfrey again spoke.

'At any rate, I understand you will feel no disappointment to speak of if your boring should show, or suggest, that Mr Langland's field is valuable, and not your own?'

'No disappointment at all. Why should I? But'—

He related in a very friendly and confidential way how he held a mortgage on the Fairfield Farm, not with any view of becoming finally possessed of it, but to draw closer such 'friendly connection' as there had always been between the two families—how it was the portion of Miss Langland—how he was interested in Miss Langland—'She is a good, sweet, dear girl, as, I

daresay, you discovered'—and therefore interested in making her and her possessions as valuable as possible: all that he set forth with great fullness, and with a subtle mixture of generous feeling and self-interest.

At first, Mr Godfrey listened with surprise and dislike, but finally with understanding. He had seen more of the business man in all his relations than had the Squire and his daughter, and he had considered him without prejudice; and he now perceived how readily both Miss Langland and her father had misunderstood Mr Purvey, who was, after all, a tolerably simple-minded creature, with a kind of sincere religious feeling and genuine kindly heart, subject, of course, to his ever-dominant commercial instincts and prepossessions. And if, in coming to that conclusion, Mr Godfrey was himself a little prejudiced—well, there it was; Mr Godfrey was himself a kind of business person, and, therefore, who can blame him?

He was so reassured by that conversation that Mr Purvey was not quite the man Mr Langland and his daughter supposed him to be—if such reassurance was necessary to the purpose with which he had come to Sussex—that he developed an enormous amount of energy. He began to make a careful survey of all the ground. He studied a geological map of the district; and he tramped for miles around, over upland and lowland, considering possibilities and likelihoods, and making notes in such strange spots that the casual farmer or labourer who chanced upon him took him for a Government surveyor or Revenue officer reckoning how much more taxing the poor land would bear. These things done, he went to Mr Purvey and set forth his conclusions, which amounted to this—that the Fairfield Farm was a far more likely ground for successful boring than Mr Purvey's own; and Mr Purvey considered him, as if he would have liked to ask if he or Mr Langland had engaged him to survey and take stock of the situation.

'Now,' said Mr Godfrey, 'I would like to ask Mr Langland to let me try a boring experiment on that top field: have you any objection to my asking him?'

'Objection? No!' said Mr Purvey, settling his glasses well on his nose to look at the young man (they were then in 'the library' of the concrete villa). 'Why should I object? But Mr Langland may; firstly, because he has, I think, an absurd, old-fashioned feeling that only the skin of the earth, so to say, is to be used for growing crops, and that the Almighty has not given us any right to pry into its bowels; or, secondly, because'—fitting together the tips of the fingers of both hands with a smile—'Mr Langland, I fancy, cannot afford the expense of a boring operation.'

'I won't ask him to,' answered Mr Godfrey promptly. 'I shall tell him at once that I propose to do it at my own cost—out of mere scientific curiosity.'

'Oh!' said Mr Purvey, closing his hands in a clasp. 'In that case, he may not object at all: I should think he will not object.'

'Then, of course,' said Mr Godfrey, 'I must tell him of your boring, of which he knows nothing yet?'

'Of course, you must,' said Mr Purvey, resett-

ling his glasses, and considering the young man again; 'and you may tell him that I have kept it secret till I knew something certain of the result, for the purpose of giving him a pleasant surprise if the boring suggested any advantage to him.'

'Oh, quite so,' said Mr Godfrey. 'I'll tell him.'

And Mr Godfrey next day went to call on the Squire. He was at home, and received him kindly, though somewhat sadly: his expedition to town had not been so successful as he had hoped it might be.

'I have called on you, Mr Langland,' said Mr Godfrey, when they had exchanged greetings and courtesies, 'for a special purpose.'

'Yes?' said the Squire, seeing in prospect some new disquietude added to his burden of anxiety, and setting himself firmly to receive it.

'I think you know,' continued Mr Godfrey, 'that I came down here on business of Mr Purvey's.'

'Yes,' said the Squire, casting about with alarm if the business could concern him; 'I remember.'

'Mr Purvey, I have found, had set going a boring experiment—boring for coal!'

'Boring for coal?' exclaimed the Squire, staring, and grasping the arms of his chair. 'Coal?—Is he mad?'

'Not quite,' answered Mr Godfrey, smiling. 'There is coal underneath all these downs, you know: there can be no doubt at all about that. The only doubt is, "Will it pay to work it?"—And that was what Mr Purvey, being an energetic and daring man of business, was determined to test.'

'Humph!' grunted the Squire, still vigorously grasping the arms of his chair, as if to make sure he had hold of something solid, if it were only wood.

'He has kept it quiet, Mr Langland,' continued Mr Godfrey.

The Squire interrupted him: 'That people mightn't think him cracked.'

'Not quite that, Mr Langland,' said the other. 'He is the last man, I think, to be afraid of that. He kept it quiet, he has asked me to tell you, that you might have an agreeable surprise if the result of the experiment, when I had examined them, promised well for you—for your land.'

'Agreeable for me!—Promised well for my land!' exclaimed the Squire, transported from one surprise to another. 'And do they?'

'They do,' answered Mr Godfrey, 'promise very well, indeed, for you—and nothing at all for himself.'

'And he has asked you to tell me that?'

'He has asked me to tell you,' answered Mr Godfrey.

'What dodge is he up to now?' asked the Squire, trying hard to look crafty.

'No dodge at all, I think, Mr Langland,' said Mr Godfrey. 'I believe he is quite sincere—in this, at least.'

'Well,' exclaimed the Squire, shifting his chair and resettling himself, with a wondering eye on his visitor, 'you astonish me, Mr Godfrey!—His experiment is really promising for me and not for him, and he asked you to tell me!—But how promising, Mr Godfrey?' he asked with a slight frown of suspicion. 'Promising of what?'

'Promising of great profit,' said Mr Godfrey. 'You know what it would mean to find a coal mine on your estate.'

'Yes,' said the Squire gloomily, 'I know. I have seen the kind of thing: smoke and blackness, rows of ugly cottages for miners, dead trees, and rowdy, drunken men, and the nearest little town made a pandemonium. But yet'—he pondered.

'With proper management,' said Mr Godfrey, 'most of these results may be prevented; and a goodish mine would be worth to you from five thousand to ten thousand pounds a year.'

'So much as that!' exclaimed the Squire with open eyes. 'But—but,' he stammered, 'how do you set to work to get it?'

'Well, first of all, Mr Langland,' said Mr Godfrey, 'I want you to let me try a boring experiment on that top field of yours close to Mr Purvey's property.'

'But,' murmured the Squire, again downcast when he bethought him that the experiment must cost money, 'will that be expensive?'

'Not very.—But I wish you, Mr Langland,' said the young man hurriedly, 'to let me bear such expense as there may be. I would do as much any day to gratify my scientific curiosity. And,' he added with a smile, 'if we find a mine, I suppose you will let me have the first bid for the lease of the working?'

'Certainly, certainly,' said the Squire, now rubbing his hands in excitement; 'try it by all means.—But I am forgetting. That field is part of my daughter's property: I ought to consult her. Will you permit me to call her in?'

'Certainly, certainly,' said Mr Godfrey, with almost as much expectation as the Squire had inspired the words with.

The Squire withdrew, returning very soon to say that he found his daughter was out.

'I suppose,' said he with a feverish kind of wistfulness, 'that you want to be getting on with that?'

'I do,' answered Mr Godfrey, his mind fixed with regret on the absence of Miss Langland.

'Will you come to dinner to-night?—Yes, that will do. Come to dinner; and then—then we can discuss the matter thoroughly.'

An hour or two later, Kitty Langland returned. She and her sister had gone for a walk—there was little driving or riding in those days of household reduction—and on their return they had met—

'Whom do you think, father? That Mr Godfrey, with Mr Purvey leaning on his arm!—leaning almost affectionately on his arm! He seemed at first inclined to stop, but he didn't. He only raised his hat, and—what do you think?—blushed!—positively blushed! I had no idea that a man who has been all about the world and who has mixed in all sorts of good society could blush!'

'Did he blush, do you think, Kitty,' asked her father with a mischievous twinkle, 'for the company he was in, or because he was overcome with the sudden vision of you, my dear?'

'Don't be silly, father!' said Kitty, but she looked down—to smoothen her gloves.—'But you seem in good spirits, dear,' she observed, raising her eyes again.

'Well, yes, I am,' said her father. 'Mr

Godfrey has been here to tell me a most remarkable thing. I went to find you to assist in the interview, but you weren't to be found.'

'What did he say?' asked Kitty timidly, while a glowing flush rose and suffused all her countenance to her ears.

'Say!' exclaimed her father. 'Mr Godfrey is an extremely clever young man, and I believe he is twisting that Purvey round his finger!'

Then her father told her the whole wonderful business which Mr Godfrey had come to disclose; and as she listened, her wonder and her pleasure grew, and her gratitude to the man who had thus suddenly turned their anxious and gloomy outlook into a halcyon prospect.

'And he is coming to dinner to-night?' she said, rising. 'I am glad you asked him, though I'm afraid we can't give him anything very nice at such short notice.—But, father,' she added, returning after she had taken a step or two away, 'don't you think you ought to have asked Mr Purvey too?'

'Asked Purvey too?' exclaimed the Squire. 'Why?'

'Well,' said Kitty, 'he is, after all, Mr Godfrey's host, and—and our neighbour, and he really seems to have behaved rather nicely in this matter, whether Mr Godfrey has induced him to, or not; and if Mr Godfrey doesn't mind him, why should we? We might send a message over.'

'But won't Purvey,' said the Squire, feeling his beard, 'be in that way encouraged in those pretensions of his—about his son, I mean?'

'His pretensions about his son!' exclaimed Kitty contemptuously. 'We can soon dismiss them—if this business turns out as Mr Godfrey expects!' (Ignorant, unbusiness-like Kitty saw herself in the possession of from five thousand to ten thousand pounds a year a week or two thence!) 'I wouldn't marry his son on any account now!'

She was conscious of the doubtful meaning and emphasis of the 'now,' and she glanced dubiously at her father. But he was intent upon this immediate matter of the invitation to Purvey, who had never yet dined in his house.

'Very well,' said he; 'I'll send a message.' And he went to write it.

STRANGE MESSENGERS AND MODES OF COMMUNICATION.

It is indeed strange to contemplate the different means which man has employed, and the various methods adopted in various countries, to carry news, both in times of peace and in times of war. The first posts are said to have originated in the regular couriers established by Cyrus about 550 B.C., who erected posthouses throughout the kingdom of Persia. Augustus was the first to introduce this institution among the Romans, 31 B.C., and he was imitated by Charlemagne about 800 A.D. Louis XI. was the first sovereign to establish posthouses in France, owing to his eagerness for news, and they were also the first institution of this nature in Europe. This was in 1470, or about two thousand years after they were started in Persia. In England in the reign of Edward IV. (1481) riders on posthorses went stages of the distance of twenty miles from each

other, in order to procure the king the earliest intelligence of the events that passed in the course of the war that had arisen with the Scots. A proclamation was issued by Charles I. in 1631, that 'whereas to this time there hath been no certain intercourse between the kingdoms of England and Scotland, the king now commands his postmaster of England for foreign parts to settle a running post or two between Edinburgh and London, to go thither and come back again in six days.'

From the earliest times fire has been used as a means of communication. Æschylus, 500 B.C., describes the communication of intelligence by burning torches as signals; and Polybius, the Greek historian, who died about 122 B.C., calls the different instruments for communicating information *pyrsa*, because the signals were always made by fire.

A few centuries ago, beacon-fires were used to summon the people in cases of invasion; and in the Highlands of Scotland the fiery cross was sent round as a signal for the clans to rally. The chieftain killed a goat, and having made a light wood-cross, he burnt the ends of it in the fire and extinguished them in the goat's blood. This was called the Fiery Cross. It was given to a speedy and trustworthy courier, who ran at full speed with it to the next village or hamlet, where he gave it to the chief resident, mentioning at the same time the place of rendezvous. It was again sent forward with equal despatch to the next village, and so it passed through the whole district. Olaus Magnus mentions a similar method in use among the Scandinavians. The incentive message to mutiny in India in 1857 was conveyed by means of a *chupattie*, a kind of native unleavened cake.

Cardinal Wolsey, when chaplain to Henry VIII., was sent on a special mission to the Emperor Maximilian, and accomplished the return journey between London and the Netherlands in about two and a half days. This was extremely fast, when we consider the state of the roads and the slow sea-passage between Dover and Calais. Robert Carey, to announce the death of Queen Elizabeth to King James, rode from London to Edinburgh, a distance of about four hundred miles, in three days, resting at night.

In the last century, running footmen were kept by all the county families. Sir Walter Scott relates his having seen them accompanying the state carriage of Lord Hopetoun. The old Duke of Queensberry ('Old Q.') was one of the last to employ them. They wore a light kind of livery, and generally carried a pole or stick about six feet high; in the top of it, which was hollow, they kept a little wine or a hard-boiled egg. They sometimes covered forty or fifty miles a day, and were extremely useful at a period when steam and electricity had not even been dreamt of. Such a messenger is reported to have been sent one evening from Hume Castle to Edinburgh on business for his master the Earl. He was back at Hume Castle the next morning, having accomplished the journey of seventy miles—thirty-five each way—in a single night. Another runner is said to have gone one hundred and fifty miles in forty-two hours, to get some medicine. Even at the beginning of the present

century, news travelled very slowly. In 1811 the news published in the Paris papers had taken the following number of days to reach Paris, the average speed being about seventy miles a day: from Strassburg, Lyons, and Brest, six days; from Antwerp, seven; Rome, eleven; and from Madrid, twenty-one days. To realise what a revolution steam has created in conveying news, it is worthy of note that the mails from Japan were recently conveyed to London within twenty-two days—a little more than the time required eighty years ago to cover the distance between the Spanish and French capitals.

Camels are largely used as carriers in the East; they have twice the carrying-power of an ox, and with an ordinary load of four hundred pounds, can travel twelve or fourteen days without water, going forty miles a day. The Timbuctu or Maharri breed is remarkable for speed, and is used only for couriers, going eight hundred miles in eight days, with a meal of dates or grain at nightfall.

From the earliest times, signals have been used for communicating information in warfare both on land and on sea. The use of fire as a means of signalling has already been mentioned. Elizabeth had instructions drawn up for the admiral and general of the expedition to Cadiz, to be announced to the fleet when they arrived in a certain latitude; this is said to have been the first set of signals given to the commanders of the English fleet. James II., while Duke of York, originated a set of navy signals, which were systematised by Kempenfeldt in 1780; and a Dictionary was compiled by Sir Home Popham. Mr Chappe then invented the telegraph, first used by the French in 1792, and two were erected in that country in 1816. The naval signals by telegraph enabled four hundred previously concerted sentences to be transmitted from ship to ship by varying the combinations of two revolving crosses. Mirrors for flashing messages from one eminence to another by means of the sun are still in use, and flags are employed both in the army and navy and also in the coastguard service. Semaphores for signalling purposes were invented by Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the father of Maria Edgeworth, in 1767. (See an article on the history of 'Early Telegraphs' in *Chambers's Journal* for August 31, 1889.)

Balloons were used in war at the end of the last century; they are useful in the case of besieged towns for conveying news beyond the enemy, and also for observing and reporting upon the enemy's movements in a battle. In 1794, the French, during the war against Germany, established an Aërostatic Institute at Meudon, for the purpose of forming a corps of *aëroliers*. During the battle of Fleurus, in the same year, M. Guyton de Morveau and Colonel Garlette ascended twice, and gave important information to General Jourdan. The Austrians tried to destroy the balloon with their big guns, but were unable to get within range. Balloons were used during the battle of Solferino, and also by the Federal army near Washington in July 1861. They were extremely useful during the siege of Paris in the Franco-German war. M. Duruof first managed to convey the mail-bags from Paris to Tours on the 23d of September 1870. Up to the end of February

1871, there were sixty-four balloons sent up, containing ninety-one passengers, three hundred and fifty-four pigeons, and three million letters (weighing nine tons). Postal balloons were also used during the siege of Metz in the same war. On the 8th of October 1870, M. Gambetta made his escape from Paris in a balloon, and alighted safely at Rouen.

Pigeons were frequently used as messengers in the olden times. At the siege of Modena by the Romans, pigeons were used as letter-carriers between Brutus and Hirtius. They were also used during the Crusades; at the siege of Acre, Saladin corresponded with the inhabitants by this means. At the Olympian games, competitors frequently used this means of informing their friends of their victory. It is a strange coincidence, that in the last Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, carrier-pigeons were used to send the sketches of the race to the *Daily Graphic*. These birds are largely made use of by the daily papers as bearers of news. Carrier-pigeons are extremely useful in sieges to convey letters beyond the enemy's lines. Pigeons were formerly kept at Tyburn to inform the relatives or friends of a criminal of his execution or of his reprieve. Accounts of the speed and endurance of carrier-pigeons would appear almost incredible were they not authenticated. For instance, the American passenger-pigeon can compass the whole Atlantic Ocean, and is able to fly sixteen hundred miles in twenty-four hours. On June 12, 1891, two carrier-pigeons arrived at Fall River, Massachusetts, U.S.A., having flown a distance of two hundred and three miles in two hours twenty-nine minutes—giving an average speed of over eighty-one miles an hour. The Russians are beginning to realise their importance in war, and are training falcons to catch them.

BESSIE.

By E. RENTOUL ESLEB, Author of *The Way of Transgressors*.

'You're failin', Geordie; your work is not what it was.' Mrs Carr held up to the light an end of the web the weaver had laid on the table. 'It's thin in places, and there are knots,' she said.

'The knots were in the yarn; I did not make them: it's a good web,' Geordie answered with conviction. He was a little man, with an irregular-featured, dreamy face, and gray hair that curled in small tight knots over his head. He wore a frockcoat of faded brown cloth, and trousers of the same, carefully turned up at the ankles. His appearance suggested an impoverished country schoolmaster rather than a working tradesman.

'I'm sure you do your best,' Mrs Carr conceded generously; 'but your eyesight is not what it was. I'm not findin' fault; an' I'll take nothin' off the price; but it's as well you should know you're beginnin' to go down the hill.'

Geordie did not answer; there was no good in arguing. His eyesight failing! Just as if his being stone-blind would have mattered, after five-and-forty years at the loom.

'There's a power of folk send their wool to the big factories,' the farmer's wife continued, Geordie having seemed to acquiesce; 'but I always

hold by the old neighbours; an' till your work gets still worse, Georgie'—

'It's a good web. I showed it to Bessie, an' she said it was a good web,' the man maintained stoutly.

'It's not to be expected that Bessie would want to hurt your feelin's, an' I respect her for it.—How is Bessie?' Having made her point, Mrs Carr did not wish to be needlessly cruel in driving it home. 'If you'll sit down a minute, I'll put up a bit of butter an' an egg or two for her.'

'Ah'm obliged to you, Mrs Carr.'

'I was very glad to hear the good news of Bessie,' she began, a few minutes later, as she deposited a small covered basket with a slight flourish on the table.

'What good news?'

'Why, about her an' Dan'l Pryce, that she is keepin' company with Dan'l Pryce.'

'Dan'l Pryce drops in of an evenin' now an' then, but there's no keepin' company.'

'Of course not, Georgie.' Mrs Carr burst into a laugh that showed all her white teeth. 'When a young man goes where a young woman is, there's never any keepin' company. It's always the father the young man goes to see, an' to hear about the price o' yarns an' such. To be sure, it is.' Her fat sides shook a little, and the frilled cap border quivered round her rosy face as she spoke.

'There's no keepin' company,' Georgie maintained. His ideas were limited, but they were very definite.

'Well, well; keep your own counsel, my man; folks can't be too careful where a girl's name is in question. It's you Dan'l Pryce goes to see, if you will; an' as he's a steady fellow, an' come of a decent stock, I wish you luck of him.—There; that's the basket; an' here's the money for the web, an' good-day to you.'

Mrs Carr always bewildered Georgie and dazzled such wits as he possessed. She was so fluent and so good-humouredly positive, that the little man lost himself amid her showering sentences.

Georgie Dennet was not a native of Grimpat, but he had settled there nigh on thirty years before, when times were better, work more liberally paid, or his productive power greater. Still, he did not complain; he was able to rub along, and that is as much as most people attain to or expect. He was a widower now, with but one child, the Bessie referred to, a girl of six-and-twenty, with a plain wise face, and a reputation for good sense and clever management that was distinguished even in that practical community.

That Bessie should have a lover had never occurred to Georgie, and that Daniel Pryce stood to her in that relationship was not likely to suggest itself. Daniel was younger than she, his parentage was better, and this advantage has its full value in rustic communities. Then his visits to the weaver's cottage had never seemed specially directed to Bessie—and there was Mrs Pryce!

All the same, when the idea was put before him, it did not seem so utterly unreasonable. The disparity between the young people was not so very great—three years at most, and Bessie

was—Bessie. A sigh rose from the little man's full heart and fell on the bosom of the western breeze. In six-and-twenty years she had never given him a heartache. That another man should see her as she was and desire her was very natural.

Mrs Pryce, Daniel's mother, was highly respected in the parish. As Mrs Carr said, Daniel Pryce came of a good stock, residents in the place for generations, and with an untarnished record on both sides. Mrs Pryce was a widow; that her bereavement dated only two years back was one of the things the neighbours habitually forgot, for James Pryce had, through an accident, been bed-ridden during nearly all their married life. It was worse than if he had died outright, Mrs Pryce said often, when discussing the matter dispassionately, for it added attendance on him to all her other troubles.

James Pryce's bondage lasted two decades, and when he died, he spoke of heaven as green fields among which he would wander, a strong young man again. That Daniel would inherit the farm was a foregone conclusion; he was the eldest, and birthright bulks largely in communities that are somewhat patriarchal. He was a good fellow, entirely free from small vices, but somewhat dull, even in the eyes of neighbours not remarkable for brilliancy. He was moderately tall, moderately good-looking, more than moderately muscular, entirely amiable, a man no way out of the common, or likely to assume heroic proportions in the eyes of a clever girl somewhat older than himself. But the fact was Bessie Dennet was so deeply, silently, unconfessedly in love with Daniel Pryce, that neither she nor I could put it into words.

They had been keeping company three months, but in such a reserved, unobtrusive, brotherly and sisterly way, that even shrewder people than Georgie might have noticed nothing. Daniel would drop in of an evening when Bessie sewed or knitted by the window, or filled the quills with yarn for the loom, the reel gyrating noiselessly under her deft manipulation like a big daddy-longlegs in the middle of the kitchen floor, and the talk would be altogether neighbourly, Georgie taking the chief part often. When Dan was going away, Bessie would sometimes accompany him to the little rustic gate that shut in the house and the flower-patch from the road, and the pair would stand talking there a while, under the moonlight or the stars, while the soft breezes shook the alder bushes, and the laundrails called in the standing corn. Occasionally, Dan would execute a small commission for Bessie in the market town when he went with the farm produce, and now and then he would bring her a fairin', a packet of seeds, a story-book in a gay cover, a ribbon for her neck.

The Dennets' cottage was as pretty as a picture. There are people in whose presence flowers seem to thrive. Bessie's garden had once been a piece of waste ground, but now every breath that blew through the open door was laden with a score of delicate odours. Dan could not fancy a greater joy in existence than to sit on the window-sill or lean against the lintel talking to the girl, while the bees revelled in the honeysuckle and the linnets twittered in the elms. He had sown her initials in mignonette in a bed just beneath

the window; and if, when the seedlings first showed above the surface, both he and she saw that B. D. stood for Bessie and Daniel as well as Bessie Dennet, and if they looked into each other's eyes, as the consciousness struck them simultaneously, what did it matter to any one but themselves, and who cared?

This had all lasted about three months, and not a word of love, not a caress had ever passed between them, when, about the same period, Geordie Dennet and Mrs Pryce heard from different sources that their children were keeping company.

Daniel had dressed to go out for the evening. In his attire there was that special something which signifies that a young man's toilet has a purpose in it. He came down-stairs softly, tip-toeing on the carpetless treads. At the foot of the stairs was the seldom used best room. The door stood open, which was unusual, and through it came Mrs Pryce's voice, which was more unusual still: 'I want you, Daniel.'

The young man stopped on the threshold. His mother was at the far end of the room, with her back to the light, her knitting in her hands, the long end of her worsted stocking caught under her arm. The light that lingered in the west after the setting sun fell on poor Daniel's best coat, his well-blacked boots, and the flower in his button-hole.

Mrs Pryce looked at all this splendour derisively. 'Where are you off to?' she asked with a little disdain.

'I was minded to look in for half an hour at Geordie Dennet's.'

'I thought that. Well, this is just what I wanted to say, Daniel Pryce, that I'm against these goings-on. I want no sweetheartin,' an' no daughter-in-law; leastways, one as old as myself, an' without a penny in her pocket. If folks mind their business, it's enough for them without larkin' o' evenin's. I'm fair surprised at Geordie Dennet, that he would encourage any widow-woman's son to waste his time an' make a fool of himself; an' you can tell him I said so.'

Daniel stood staring at his mother, the ruddy colour in his face gone a kind of gray with the shock. 'There is nothing against Bessie Dennet,' he stammered helplessly.

'No, nothin' at all, in her own place; but her place is not alongside o' my son. You can tell her to-night that I'm not minded to allow any carryin's-on between you.'

Daniel turned and went out without a word; but it seemed as if the very flower in his coat had shrunk and shrivelled. To him his mother's will had always meant destiny, and it never struck him to dispute it. As he passed down the lane between the hawthorn hedges, it seemed as if there was no more golden light in the western sky, no flower-faces in the grass of the wayside, no bird-voices among the whispering leaves.

Things had been too good to last, and Bessie knew the end had come when she saw Daniel's face; but she talked commonplaces, as women can in these dreadful crises, as much to hold certainty aloof as to deceive onlookers. When he was going away she went with him to the gate as usual.

'What has happened?' she asked.

He did not attempt to evade the question or make light of the trouble. 'Mother thinks I come here too often.'

Bessie understood perfectly. 'And won't she let you come again—never?' she asked a little huskily.

'Oh yes, sometimes.'

'But it will be different?'

'Yes, it will be different.'

Bessie drew a small strangled sigh. If their places had been reversed, she thought she would have rebelled a little; but before she spoke, she had accepted the woman's part of acquiescence. 'Well, we can always be good friends,' she said, with an attempt at cheerfulness.

He put out his hand and wrung hers so that it hurt her, and then he turned away without a word.

It is dangerous to interfere with these slow and silent natures. Daniel obeyed his mother, but it was with that obedience that is a growing revolt. What harm did his visits to Bessie Dennet do any one? His heart hardened against his mother. She was a cold woman, caring for no one's happiness, not even her own, valuing a man, even if he were her own son, no more than an ox, thinking nothing mattered but labour. Well, he would labour, but after that he would please himself. If he could not go to the weaver's, he would go to a worse place. Who could spend all his leisure in a dull, overcrowded kitchen, with men too tired, and a woman too ill-tempered, to speak?

Daniel sulked. He obeyed because he was too proud to do furtively anything so blameless as visiting Bessie Dennet, but he was not the less resentful and wrathful. Instead of going to the weaver's, Daniel went to the public-house, and when his mother forbade this indignantly and shrilly, he only scowled at her.

Daniel Pryce was tipsy. To be the worse for liquor on a fair day or a market day or on the occasion of a merrymaking was in the course of nature; but to be tipsy early in the afternoon and with your work all undone was so disgraceful that none of the Pryces could stand it. The mother had her say; then Reuben spoke about drunken wastrels; and Caleb, the youngest, wondered where folks found the money to get drunk on, since for his part he never could feel the price of a smoke in his pocket. The three brothers were working together unstacking corn to remove it to the barn for threshing. Without answering, Daniel threw down the long fork with which he had been working, and left the field.

Things were too bad to tolerate, and his shame of himself was a large factor in them. He felt in a bad way towards the whole world, as he moved aimlessly along the road, his hands in his pockets, his chin fallen on his breast. It was a remote country road, disused, except by the local farmers, since the making of the highway. Tufts of grass grew here and there amid the paving-stones, and briars flung their long arms across the gaping ditches. Daniel threw himself down on one of these tufts, and soon fell asleep. It was late October weather, and though there was a little tardy sunshine in the air, the earth was damp and cold. Daniel sighed in a strangled way now

and then, as the chill struck to his bones, but he did not awake.

Bessie Dennet was on her way to a neighbouring farm for her daily milk supply when she found the man she loved asleep like a tramp by the wayside. She did not cry, the pain she felt was too acute for that; she only said to herself half aloud: 'They have done him more harm than I should.'

When she spoke to Daniel, he sat up. 'It's you, Bessie,' he said dully.

'Yes. You must not sleep here, Daniel; you might take your death from it, or the fever, like your father. Get up and come home.'

He rose obediently, and went with her. 'We never see each other now,' he said fretfully.

'I don't think that's my fault, Daniel.' Bessie's smile was like tears.

'Has anybody told you that I'm—goin' to the bad?'

'You mustn't go, Daniel,' Bessie said firmly. 'You are too good and fine a man'—here her voice went low—to let any trouble turn you into a sot for the children to point at.'

He started as though a whip had struck him, and opened his lips as if to speak, but no sound came.

'We don't make our troubles less by beginning to live wrong,' she went on. 'We must try and be brave, no matter what happens.'

'It's about you,' he said huskily.

'Do you think that makes a difference? I don't just see what harm we did you, my father and I; but if your mother thinks we did, maybe she knows best; anyway, you must be a man, Daniel.'

A month later, a nine days' wonder had begun in the parish, for Daniel Pryce had sailed for America. He took the price of his passage and a small outfit as his inheritance, and the farm would be Reuben's. It was chiefly Bessie's doing, her conception of what would be best for the man for whom her love had that protective element without which love is not wholly love. To have new surroundings, new interests, to escape keen eyes and harsh judgments, that would be best for Daniel. But oh, the difference to her, when he was gone! He came to say good-bye to Bessie, but he said nothing but good-bye, with lips that twitched a little; and 'Thank you' for her keepsake.

He wrote two or three letters after he landed, the painful, dumb letters of the illiterate, saying he was well, hoping she was the same, adding that he had got work, and that the country was very large and fine; and then silence dropped like a pall between him and home.

Bessie wrote several times after he had ceased to answer—letters but little more eloquent than his own, and then she ceased to write also.

The dull days succeeded each other at Grimpat, and the seasons came and went, the flowers in the garden budded and bloomed and died, and the simple routine of life went on at the cottage below the hill, but no young step stopped at the gate, no brown face smiled over the half-door. Daniel had been disinherited and transported, just for loving her.

Thoughts like this are fatal when one is not very strong. Bessie came of a weakly race; vitality does not grow robust at the loom. In the

second summer she went about her work less vigorously, lost flesh a little, and had now and then long spells of idleness, her hands lying limp in her lap. For a time she put a good face on things, never complained, pretended not to feel; but by-and-by there was no good in pretending when her whole aspect cried out.

Geordie grew anxious; he had lost two other children just like this, failing, never complaining, dying at the last. If Bessie went too, he did not know what he should do. The neighbours began to condole with him, telling him how good Bessie was, just as if he of all the world had not the best right to know that. When it became almost beyond question that Bessie would die, then every one became very kind, called often to cheer her up, sent little presents, and said only what was best of her. Even Mrs Pryce bestirred herself; she had no grudge against Geordie Dennet or his daughter: on the whole, they had behaved very well, and had said no evil of her, or dropped an unkind word when Daniel went away.

Regarding Daniel, Mrs Pryce was not wholly satisfied. He had been a good son, had never thwarted her except in that one matter of going away. Reuben was different, was more masterful, had a will of his own, was not disposed to ask advice, nor always to take it when given. There were times when the mother recalled Daniel's ways with a new tenderness, and missed him strangely.

Meantime, while the longing for him grew and grew at home, Daniel was forgetting. It is inevitable; change is such an enlargement, and the new life was pleasant. He was only a farm-hand where he had gone—but the work was far lighter than he had often done at home; the splendid machines, which he soon learned to manage skilfully, were a constant delight to him, and the weekly wage a great gratification, he having had so little money of his own in his life. Then there was a pretty and buxom girl in the farm kitchen, who saw no reason why she should not make frank overtures to Daniel: farm-hands did just as well married as single when one could manage the dairy, and the other the harvest; a house was easily run up in a week or two, and people were happier married, it gave a permanency to things. And Daniel heard and pondered—and forgot. But that was before he saw in New England a Star of Bethlehem, the flower he remembered growing abundantly round the old sun-dial in Bessie's garden at home. What memories came back to him in a rush as he saw it—the gray blue sky; the long grass swaying with a liquid motion and a sheen of silk as the breeze rustled it; the scented breath of the clover meadows; the tweet of the sparrows on the eaves; but above all a plain good face full of an unutterable affection for him! He gave a husky cry and covered his face with his hands.

Mrs Pryce had called to see Bessie. She had come once or twice before; this time she brought a few flowers, a bachelor's button or two, a cluster of dwarf roses, a bunch of the crucifer, called rockets in country places, a blade or two of ribbon-grass. Mrs Pryce was growing kind and pitiful because she thought the end was very near. To Bessie her little manifestations were

doubly touching because they were so awkward.

'I just said I'd come to-day whatever happened,' the visitor said, seating herself on the edge of the chair and looking at the girl's thin face sharply. 'The busy season is comin' on now, and I might have difficulty in gettin' away again till 'twas too late, maybe.'

'I'm better,' Bessie said deprecatingly. She was used to these frank references to her own end, and was not conscious that they pained her.

'Yes, that's always the way with decline,' Mrs Pryce answered with the kindest intentions—'one day better, another day worse, another day better, and then, poof! out you go.'

Bessie quivered a little, and the hand that held Mrs Pryce's posy shook.

'It'll be dreadful lonely for your father at his age, you know,' Mrs Pryce went on mournfully. 'Me and Mrs Bridges was just talkin' it all over last night, and we did say that somethin' ought to be done to put him in a right way when he's left. He's up in years, to be sure; but there's many a girl in the country that's that too, an' yet would make him comfortable when you're gone, an' be a good wife to him. He's a bit easy-goin', you know, an' not likely to think of what's best for himself; but if you would speak to him, for his good'—

'I'm not so sure that I won't get better,' Mrs Pryce, poor Bessie said.

'My dear, I'm sure we all hope you will,' Mrs Pryce said, with a hearty intonation of doubt; 'but don't set your mind on it. Life is not a thing to be set on, when the Lord has decreed to take it from us. I'm sure if I had died when I was young I would have been saved many a hard day an' many a sad heart, what with my man ill, an' the farm an' beasts to see after, an' the children to bring up. The Lord knows what a time I've had. An' what does it come to in the end? Look at my sons after all I've slaved for them! Daniel at the world's end, an' Reuben minded to think he knows everything better'n I do.'

'Has there been no new letter from Daniel?' Bessie asked, the little tremor in her voice perceptible to herself, in spite of her efforts.

'No. Maybe I'll never see or hear of him again. Why, Bessie, if he'd married you, an' stayed at home, 'twouldn't have been half as bad.'

She had no intention of being either coarse or cruel; she simply spoke out of her own full heart, as is the rural way, without thought of her companion's point of view.

'But he did not marry me, you see, and he'll never want to, now. You've had your troubles, Mrs Pryce, but I can't say I'm sorry for you,' Bessie said. She had been stung intolerably, and she revolted more suddenly because of her weakness. 'You had a good son, who never gave you a sore heart or a shamed face, till you took shame out of what was no shame. He worked like a horse, that's what he did, from he was able to stand, and all the diversion ever he asked was to look in for an hour at our house when his work was over. An' our company was safe company, Mrs Pryce, whether it was grand or not. He never learned to think worse of good-

ness from us; he would have been no worse son to you in your old age for anything ever we said to him. But you did not care for that; to your mind it was better to drive him to drink an' out of the country, than that we should be friends. Well, you've had your will; we're not friends any longer; but don't ask me to feel for you, for I don't, and I can't.'

Mrs Pryce was not angered, scarcely surprised. She listened to Bessie as to a fractious child, said: 'There, there!' at intervals in a soothing way, sighed heavily when Bessie ended, and said then, in a complaining tone, and more to herself than the girl: 'it's hard to know what to do for the best many a time. One speaks a word in haste, and things follow it that one never thought of.'

Bessie did not answer; she was weak and trembling, but the tears only glittered on her lashes, and did not fall. Whatever came of it, she was glad to have spoken her mind once to this hard old woman.

After a time, Mrs Pryce rose, and with a commonplace or two, took her leave; then Bessie gave way to her emotions, and cried as if her heart would break. What a world it was! It was no great grief to leave it, with its mistakes and cruelties and pain. It was these that mattered, not the living or the dying, which happened to all alike. Bessie was very simple, very inexperienced, very illiterate; but she had grasped a truth that often eludes the wise and learned: that life is meant to be very satisfactory and serene, if only we would not complicate it needlessly for each other and ourselves. In the calm that followed that burst of storm, Bessie saw things clearly, saw that she stood at the grave's edge, and did not care very much whether she went down or backwards—saw the ugly things that spoil life—the tyranny, the pride, the spite; and the fair things, love, loyalty, generosity, truth, that make it worth living—saw that it is not always the bad people that crush others, but just as often the good, in a bad mood. Her heart went out suddenly in a rush of tenderness towards that bygone might-have-been. Now that she knew his mother better, she understood all that she, Bessie, must have been to Daniel. In the harsh, hard-working household into which he had been born, what chance had he of loving anything?

And then she sat up suddenly, and the red flushed in her face like flame. She was experienced enough now to be able to minimise the daily shock of Reuben Pryce's footfall passing the gate, but it always thrilled her to the heart, it sounded so like Daniel's. This time it did not pass; it paused, came slowly up the path among the flowers, and entered at the door.

Bessie rose and stood, a frail figure, against the high chair-back, and Daniel came forward and laid his great hand on her thin shoulder and said, with a terrible cry in his voice: 'What have they done to you, oh my dear, my dear—what have they done to you?'

'Hush! Don't be frightened; I'm better.' She sat down and took his hand between hers and held it. 'I was very ill; but I'll live, now you have come back.'

And she did live, grew strong, and even pretty, the neighbours said.

Mrs Pryce behaved generously. She wanted Daniel at home now, and she made promises and overtures, would have conceded a great deal, or thought she would have done so; but Daniel had travelled, his horizon had widened. Grimpat was not in his eyes what it had been, nor the farm a great inheritance. He wanted Bessie, but he wanted to go away then, parting peaceably with every one. Mrs Pryce gave them a grand wedding; and the young couple left for the vessel that was to take them abroad. Geordie sailed with them; and in one of the few letters he wrote home to tell how prosperous they all were: he said Daniel's garden was half full of the Star of Bethlehem.

IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

There are but few sections of the civilised world where a man's memory will be carried back to the days of his grandfather as vividly as in the mountainous districts of the Southern States, where, until recently, the distiller of moonshine whisky has carried on his illegal occupation in defiance of the Government, but where to-day the enterprising Yankee capitalists, assisted by their English colleagues, are busily engaged in building towns and factories. Among the many interesting features which will present themselves to the mind of an inquisitive visitor, the most prominent probably are the peculiarities in speech. Here the white and coloured natives 'tote' a burden instead of carrying such; a man is 'powerful' weak instead of very weak; 'right smart chance' of rain falls instead of a severe rain-storm; the baby is quite 'pearl' instead of being in good health and lively; you 'reckon' such will happen instead of expecting or thinking it; you go to a 'burying' instead of a funeral; the miner 'raises' ore instead of mining it, and is called an 'ore-raiser' instead of a miner; the gardener 'grabbles' potatoes instead of digging them; the surveyor uses 'staubs' instead of stakes; the housewife bakes a 'pone' of bread instead of a loaf.

Another feature of interest is the religious sentiment which apparently prevails throughout, especially during that season of the year immediately preceding the gathering or harvesting of the crops. Every settlement, though it may not be provided with a schoolhouse, has its church or meeting-house, where services are held on the Sabbath, and where, during the season I refer to, protracted meetings or revivals are carried on day after day and night after night, as long as the interest manifested by the congregation and the strength of the preacher will warrant. These meetings are regularly attended by every one in the neighbourhood, many travelling to and fro to each service in the ox-wagons used on the farms, into which a merry crowd will seat themselves, including the entire family, with often three generations represented. A stranger meeting the outfit on the road would imagine that a party of picnickers had been encountered, and he would be excusable in such a supposition. For while of course many attend these meetings from purely religious motives, yet many also go because such are the only variety of entertainment known in the neighbourhood. To the young men and maidens an opportunity for

courting is presented on the road to and from the meeting-house; but once arrived there all levity must cease, because it is the custom of the country to separate the sexes, the men occupying one side of the church, the women the opposite side. At such meetings, after singing several hymns and listening to a long sermon or exhortation, in which every argument likely to produce an impression on his congregation is resorted to by the preacher, the opportunity is offered for members to give expression to their feelings, or desire to become identified with the church. Another feature of interest are the 'all-day singings,' held at irregular intervals at the churches, when, by arrangements previously made, a certain Sabbath is set apart for an 'all-day singing.' This will attract a crowd of the younger as well as older residents of not only the immediate neighbourhood but also from distant settlements. After the regular services in the morning are concluded, the entire congregation gather in some grove near by—usually every church has a beautiful grove of shade-trees and spring of pure crystal water in its immediate vicinity—where the baskets of provision brought for the occasion are opened and every one enjoys a regular picnic dinner. After partaking of the refreshments, the people again assemble in the church, and for hours indulge in singing gospel hymns and songs of praise.

Another custom worthy of mention is the care of the neighbourhood graveyards by the inhabitants of the settlement; when, by arrangement, a certain day is set apart for all to assemble at the church, bringing the necessary tools to clean up the graveyard. Baskets of provision are brought on such occasions, and the features of a picnic are added, which rob the manual labour to be performed of much of its appearance of regular work, and make it instead an occasion of pleasant social intercourse as well as an exhibition of reverence for deceased friends.

While in these mountainous sections there is much ignorance because of inadequate educational facilities, yet in no section of country will a visitor find a heartier or more hospitable welcome than at the homes of these people, who so conservatively preserve the social customs and manners of their forefathers.

IN THE DAWNING.

With dimpled hands enfolded on her breast,
And lily lids o'er shading violet eyes
In wondrous sleep, my little baby lies,
Like a wee birdie, in her warm white nest.
Outside, above a hill's dawn-purpled crest,
All radiant gold, the summer sun doth rise,
A glad lark, singing, to the blue heaven flies.
My baby smileth softly in her rest.
Straightway a sunbeam falleth on her face,
As if it were God's answering smile of light,
And lo! two violets are blossoming
All dewily—as violets bloom in spring.
Two lily lids are folded out of sight—
My baby wakes, beneath God's smile of grace.

ALICE FURLONG.

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SOME POINTS OF SELF-DEFENCE.

THE Common Law of England holds him guiltless who has taken another's life in such circumstances as show justifiable homicide, excusable homicide, homicide by misadventure, or homicide by chance-medley; and the statute declares, affirming it, That no punishment shall be incurred by any person who shall kill another by misfortune or in his own defence or in any other manner without felony: in either of the cases given, the so-called Right of Self-defence may arise. That right of self-defence, although recognised by statute, is not absolute; it is a concession which, if used for retaliative or revengeful purposes, or for reprisals, affords no excuse. The cardinal principle should be that he who is unwilling to risk his acts of self-defence being questioned in a court of law should not take the law into his own hands.

Persons are more disposed to commit the fatal act of self-defence in the cases of burglary and attempts at robbery from the person with violence. There exists a very prevalent idea that the malefactors may be done to death, may be shot at like vermin, under those circumstances, without fear of consequences; but when the subject is examined it does not appear at all clear how far firearms or deadly weapons may be used for defensive purposes, inasmuch as the guiding statements of judges and of various experts in criminal law are of very general application; and after those views have been exhausted, reliance can only be placed upon a jury to safeguard him who has, with reasonable grounds, taken the law into his own hands in such circumstances, should serious results ensue therefrom.

In this connection we must remember that the law presumes when human life is taken that the killing was unlawful, with or without malice as the facts may show. We will suppose that a householder, in shooting at a suspicious-looking stranger who has secretly entered his house late at night, and whom he believes to be a burglar, kills him. The householder will say: 'I am

justified. My house is my castle, to defend against the intrusions of burglars and thieves.' But his self-defence raises the important question, had he reasonable grounds for supposing the stranger he shot to be a burglar? He will be tried, and a jury, in all the circumstances of the case, will consider the reasonableness of his belief. If he had reasonable grounds, they will acquit him; if, in their opinion, he had not, the verdict in all probability will be manslaughter. And all this, a querist may say, for defending my house and my property!

It is so, human life being considered as too sacred to be lightly taken, although it may be thought that a burglar found in a criminal act has as nearly as possible surrendered his right to have his life held sacred.

There are curious cases in legal annals demonstrating the danger of using weapons under the fear of burglary being attempted, and attacking a believed-to-be burglar. One of such cases is of comparatively recent date, and arose as follows: 'A woman living in a cottage on Bridgemarsh Island, a lonely spot on the coast of Essex, was disturbed one dark afternoon in the month of December by hearing, as she supposed, persons attempting to break into the house. Becoming greatly alarmed, she sent for some neighbours' help. A man and two sturdy lads came to her. They looked about the premises, but could find no one; and ultimately the man left; but at the persuasion of the frightened cottager, the two lads agreed to stay that night and guard the premises. Before he left, the man advised her to load the gun she had in the cottage, and if any one came, to fire. A short time before midnight, voices were heard outside the cottage. One of the lads went out and placed himself on the sea-wall within a few yards of the cottage; he was followed by the other lad, holding the gun. Without the least warning, a man jumped up from behind the wall, and seizing the first lad by the throat, threw him on to his knees. His cries for help were heard by the lad who held the gun, and he called out several times, "If you don't say who you are,

I'll fire." No response was made; and he finally fired, fatally wounding the man. It was then found, to the horror of the lads, that the wounded man was the son of the proprietor of a neighbouring brickfield, who was watching his father's ducks; and hearing the two lads come out, and for the purpose of frightening them only, had jumped up and seized one of them by the throat. A doctor was procured; but the wounded man died next morning. The lad who fired the gun was put upon his trial for manslaughter, when the jury returned a verdict of not guilty.

The point to be gleaned from this case is in the statement of the judge, 'that it was a dangerous doctrine to go forth from one of Her Majesty's judges that a person was justified in using a gun under such circumstances.' Ordinary intelligence, however, would see every element of justification therein; but we know that to fire a gun to frighten is not permitted by law.

Well-known writers on criminal law say that in cases of felony committed—which term includes burglary, housebreaking, and robbery from the person—if the offender will not suffer himself to be arrested, but stands upon his defence, or flees, so that he cannot possibly be apprehended alive by those who pursue him, he may be lawfully killed by them. This is justifiable homicide. And so, where an attempt is made to murder or to rob or to commit burglary, if the attack be made by the assailant with violence and surprise, the party attacked may lawfully put him to death.

From this it would seem that before a burglar or robber may be wounded, his arrest must be attempted, if he does not show fight or flee; but this is not so to the full extent, as the following leading, though old, case will show. These are obviously of greater authority than expert opinions. 'A man's servant had secretly procured the help of another servant, a stranger, in her household work, and one night about twelve o'clock, the master being in bed, the former was about to let the latter out of the house. Thinking she heard thieves attempting to break into the house, the former went and told her master so. He took his drawn sword, and the servant, fearing the help should be seen, thrust her into the buttery. The mistress seeing the help there, and not knowing her, conceived her to be the thief, and called to her husband, who entered the buttery in the dark, and lunging with his sword, wounded the help in the chest, causing death. He was tried; but the judges ruled this to be misadventure only.'

A mere trespass without felonious intent, however provoking and irritating, will not justify or excuse the use of deadly weapons in defence of property, as the following case shows: 'A person was greatly annoyed by strangers trespassing upon his farm, and he repeatedly gave full notice that he would shoot any one who did so. He at length discharged a gun at a person who was trespassing, and wounded him in the thigh, which led to erysipelas, and the man died. The shooter was indicted for murder, found guilty, and executed. But if the owner had used a

weapon, such as a stick, and death had ensued, this would still have been manslaughter; for the owner of the property had no lawful right to use any weapon to beat off a mere trespasser; and giving notice of his intention to commit an unlawful act did not cover the consequences of that act.'

We are not, however, without authoritative judicial guidance as to the lengths we are permitted to go in self-defence: we find that Mr Baron Garrow is reported to have said in one case, that any person set by his master to watch a garden or yard is not at all justified in shooting at or injuring in any way persons who may come into these premises even in the night; and if he saw them go into his master's henroost, he would still not be justified in shooting them. He ought, first, said the learned Baron, to see if he could not take measures for their apprehension. But here the life of the prisoner was threatened; and if he considered his life in actual danger, he was justified in shooting the deceased, as he has done. But if, not considering his own life in danger, he rashly shot this man, who was only a trespasser, he will be guilty of manslaughter.

Another very learned judge once summarised the law of self-defence in his address to the jury in the following terms: 'A civil trespass will not excuse the firing of a pistol at a trespasser in sudden resentment or anger. If a person takes forcible possession of another man's premises so as to be guilty of a breach of the peace, it is more than a trespass. It is so also if a man with force enters into the dwelling of another. But a man is not authorised to fire a pistol on every intrusion or invasion of his house. He ought, if he has a reasonable opportunity, to endeavour to remove him without having recourse to the last extremity. But the making an attack upon a dwelling, and especially at night, the law regards as equivalent to an assault on a man's person; for a man's house is his castle; and therefore, in the eye of the law, it is equivalent to an assault.'

On this we would remark, that a simple trespass is a totally different thing from a burglary: the former is not a felony, the latter is.

In a book of old law reports, a supposititious case is put thus by a learned judge as to a mere trespass: 'If B enters a house, and A gently lays his hands upon him to turn him out—which, parenthetically, we may say is the proper act at first—and then B turns upon him and assaults him, and A kills him—not being otherwise able to avoid the assault or retain his lawful possession—it would have been in self-defence.'

The crucial test, it will be seen, of the justifiableness of the act of self-defence is its general reasonableness under the surrounding circumstances, and this is of equal application to self-defence from burglars as to other classes of criminal assailants with violence.

It deserves to be mentioned that some insurance offices now undertake 'burglary and robbery insurances' at premiums varying from two shillings and sixpence to five shillings per cent.; and large numbers of the public are said to be taking advantage of the system. A burglar's visit need not therefore, in such cases, necessarily mean a loss to the householder. This is certainly an improvement on the old order of things, and perhaps it

will do more to lessen the chance of loss of life or violence than any statute; yet, on the other hand, the depredators may gather fresh courage, as their chances of capture are obviously lessened.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XVII.—continued.

THEN Ainsworth looked very conscious indeed; for now he was certain of what he had been for some moments dimly suspicious, that the old friend to whom Suffield alluded must be none other than Isabel's father. Suffield could not but note the change that passed upon him, and said to himself: 'It must be opium with him too! To think of such a thing!' Then the gentle, generous heart of the good man was suffused with pity, and with the desire to save his young friend. There were tears in his voice, if not in his eyes, as he leaned towards Ainsworth and laid his hand on his arm.

'Alan, my lad,' said he, 'you must give it up, cost what it will. If it's living alone that tempts you to it, come and live wth me; there's plenty of room in the house, and you can do your writing in here. Nobody will bother you, unless it be those old chaps of Padiham!'

What could Ainsworth do but look amazed and stammer: 'But what do you mean? What's in your mind, Mr Suffield? There's something the matter with you, or with me! There's a misunderstanding, really and truly, on my side or on yours!'

Suffield leaned back in his chair and considered him. 'Do you mean to tell me, Alan, that you can't guess what I'm driving at?'

'Not in the least,' answered Alan, 'I assure you, Mr Suffield. You appear to think that I have become an opium-smoker, or something of the kind. It's a completely mad notion; and if anybody else but yourself had it, Mr Suffield, I should say he was either insane or spiteful. I can't think you're either the one or the other; you must have some good reason for speaking as you've spoken. Tell me what it is.'

'Well, now, then, I'll be frank with you, my lad,' said Suffield. 'I have it on the very best authority—an authority, mind you, there's no doubt about at all—that my niece, Isabel Raynor, has within the last week or so got entangled wth some man who has the bad habit of taking drink, or some other stimulant—got so entangled that she feels responsible for him.'

Ainsworth rose and laughed aloud—a laugh not of merriment, but partly of bitterness, partly of embarrassment—and paced to and fro as he laughed.

'And so,' he said, 'you thought that this man must be me!'

'Well, you see,' said Suffield, somewhat feebly, 'I knew no man but you that she seemed in the least interested in; and then your coming up to London fitted in with the time of this, and you admit that you've seen her.'

'And my having taken to drink or some stimulant, and my entangling her somehow, seemed matters of course, that needed neither discussion nor inquiry! 'Pon my word!' exclaimed the

young man, 'it is the prettiest chain of evidence I ever heard of! It is worthy of a circumstantial case at the Old Bailey! It is wonderful to consider the crimes one's friends may believe one capable of!'

'Not crimes, my lad,' pleaded Suffield, now put out and humbled. 'But there—I see I'm wrong. I confess it.'

'Mr Suffield,' said Alan, stopping before him and laying his hand on his shoulder, 'I couldn't love you and respect you more if you were my father; you are the best and the most generous-tempered man I know'—

'No, no, Alan!'

'But you are. And I can't believe you ever would have thought these things of me yourself; they must have been suggested to you by some one else.'

'Still,' said Suffield, 'I'm responsible, my lad, and I beg your pardon.' (Ainsworth grasped his hand.) 'I see *you* can't be the man. But who the dickens can he be? Her uncle Harry and I are very much worried about it.'

'Oh, Uncle Harry!' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'Don't you think, Mr Suffield, it would be best if you and Uncle Harry went and put the question to Miss Raynor herself?'

'Perhaps it would—perhaps it would.'

'Now,' said Ainsworth, looking at his watch, 'my time is up.'

'Well, Alan, my lad,' said Suffield, holding his hand, 'you forgive my blundering idiocy?'

'It's not a question of forgiveness between you and me, Mr Suffield,' said Alan; 'it's a question merely of understanding.'

'Say no more, my lad; say no more. I'm just an ass. I was almost forgetting: I want you to come and dine, to meet some people—political nobs, and that sort of thing. But I'll drop you a line when it's fixed.' So Ainsworth went, and Suffield, as he heard the street door close, said to himself: 'What a nice clever lad he is! Now, I must just find that Harry!'

Of course Suffield went and reported this singular interview to Uncle Harry, and Ainsworth as much as he thought prudent or necessary to Isabel, with results which shall appear.

Ainsworth, in sum, merely led Isabel to suppose that her uncle Harry suspected she had taken her father under her wing, and had communicated his suspicion to her other uncle; and therefore Isabel, somewhat nettled and angry that her uncle could not contain a secret, was careful to keep her father as much secluded as possible at such times as her uncle might call, and when he did call she was more reserved with him than had been her wont.

The two uncles hesitated to make up their minds to inquire directly of Isabel herself, as Ainsworth had suggested, and as was manifestly proper, concerning this matter that vexed them. They both knew her—Mr Suffield especially—to be a young lady of spirit, and they feared she might deeply resent, not so much their interference, as the inferential suspicion that she could be doing ought but right. But it came about within a week that they felt they could put the question off no longer. Uncle Harry had called twice, and each time he had returned to report to Suffield his serious impression that the mysterious person with whom Isabel was entangled was

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living in the house with her! He (Uncle Harry) had been delayed before he had been admitted; the landlady had seemed flustered; and there was lurking by the fender-corner a pair of slippers that were obviously too large for Isabel's own feet! Suffield had pooh-poohed that report the first time it was made, but when it was repeated he resolved to find out the truth of the matter at once. Uncle Harry had called on Isabel about tea-time: after dinner, he and Suffield set out to call on her again, leaving Mrs Suffield to suppose that they were going down to the House of Commons together.

Isabel and her father sat at supper. Isabel was at ease, for she expected no visitor, unless Ainsworth or Doughty should come in before bedtime; and her father was in the serenest of moods, for he had that day written a review of a book which Ainsworth had brought him. They sat thus, talking of books and interested in their talk—for Isabel found her father's remarks acute and skilled, and her father found hers fresh and unconventional—when there came a knock at the street door, and an instant or two after the sitting-room door was opened and in stepped her two uncles. Her father sat facing the door, and her uncles stopped as soon as they had entered, with their eyes fixed on him.

'Oh,' said Uncle Harry, and there was a note of suppressed anger and contempt in his voice, which at once roused Isabel's spirit. 'It's you—is it?'

Her father did not answer, but he glanced at Isabel, as in surprise and reproach, as if he would say: 'Have *you* done this? Have *you* brought these terrible men down on me?'

Isabel rose and placed chairs for her uncles. 'Won't you sit down—both of you?' she said.

Uncle George shook his head sadly: his usually ruddy tint had sunk into a purplish gray; Uncle Harry paid no heed to her words: he was pale as death, the pupils of his eyes seemed reduced to glittering pin-points, and his hands trembled. Seeing them all standing, John Raynor rose too—apparently out of the merest instinct of politeness: he stood nearly a head taller than his brother. It was clear there was no lack of recognition on either side.

'It is a very long time since we have met, Harry,' said John, holding out his hand.

'Yes,' said Harry, disregarding the proffered hand; 'it is twenty-five years. And once again it is the cause of a woman that brings us together.'

On hearing that, Isabel started and turned, and met her father's pleading eyes, which seemed to ask, 'What does this mean?'

'What are you doing here?' asked Harry, with his eyes still fixed on his brother. 'What mischief have you done?—or are you contriving? You are my brother! It is wonderful! And—God forgive me!—I hate you more than any living thing!'

'Uncle Harry!—Uncle Harry!' cried Isabel. 'What has come to you that you say such horrible things! Why don't you sit down and talk quietly, and be friendly with us? You are brothers—sons of the same parents: are you not ashamed that a brother should speak so bitterly, and feel so bitterly, to a brother?'

'No; I am not!' answered Uncle Harry. His

glance lighted on her an instant, and then returned to his brother.

'You don't know what used to be between them, my dear,' said Suffield in Isabel's ear. 'It always drives Harry mad when he thinks of it!'

'You took my wife from me!' continued Uncle Harry to his brother.

'Not your wife, Harry,' said Suffield, laying his hand on his shoulder with a kindly grasp: 'your sweetheart only. Come; be just if you can't be reasonable.'

'She had promised to be my wife, and she would have been!' said Harry without turning his head. 'You took my wife,' he continued, 'and now you take your daughter!—*her* daughter!'

John Raynor had listened to him, standing half-dazed with his hands crossed before him. He now stepped forward again with his hand out. 'Is there never to be an end,' he asked, 'of that subject—that unfortunate subject—between us, Harry?'

'Why are you here?' continued Harry. 'Are you come to ruin and kill her daughter, as you ruined and killed her?'

John Raynor sat down and dully listened, while his hand clutched aimlessly at the table: he was deathly pale, and his lips and his limbs were twitching convulsively.

His daughter came to his relief, and stood behind him, with her hands on his shoulders. 'Uncle,' she said quietly, but with a vibration of anger in her voice, 'you must not talk like that! I have let you go on too long! I am responsible for my father being here! I brought him to live with me, and I know what I am doing!'

'You do not! You do not, foolish girl!' cried her uncle. 'He will insinuate himself into your confidence! He will flatter you into the belief that you are the very cleverest woman in all this world! And all the time he will torture your mind and soul with hopes of great things—hopes which never will be fulfilled! And he will live upon you!—live upon you! What is it that women find in him? *She* was infatuated, as you are! I was preparing to give her all I had, when he came with nothing in his hand, and yet she put her hand in his and went away with him—to poverty and death! I am ready to give you all I have; but no: he comes, not to give, but to take, and you receive him with open arms!'

'It won't do, my dear!' said Isabel's father, starting to his feet suddenly. 'I mustn't do that! I must go away! I must go away at once! I'll go to Alexander! Where are my boots? Will you be so good as ask for my boots, my dear?'

'Uncle Harry, you must go away!' said Isabel, with her hand firmly clasped on her father's wrist. 'Go away, please!—Take him away, Uncle George!'

Before he went, Uncle George came to John Raynor with a peculiar mellowness of both voice and eyes and took him by the hand. 'Well, John,' said he, 'let bygones be bygones; and be a good man. You've got a dear daughter there—as good a girl as ever was. I'll see you again soon.'

He took Uncle Harry's arm, who put his hand

to his head and then to his heart, and walked away with him submissively and in silence.

That night Uncle Harry sent out a telegram to his nephew: 'Send me Daniel at once for a few weeks.'

RECLAIMING THE ZUIDER ZEE.

HOLLAND is about to acquire additional territory, and that neither by conquest nor colonisation. The Zuider Zee, that great expanse of water, half bay, half lake, created six centuries ago by storm and flood at the expense of the mainland, is to be reclaimed and converted into arable land. The idea of this stupendous undertaking has been germinating in the minds of generations of Dutchmen, but only took definite shape about forty years ago, when the successful reclamation of the Haarlem Lake demonstrated the practicability of the enterprise. The Haarlem affair was, of course, a trifle compared with the present project; but as the conditions and methods of operation, although on widely different scales, are practically similar, the results of the smaller operation afford a more or less reliable standard by which to calculate the cost of the present scheme and an approximate estimate as to the value of the reclaimed land.

The Haarlem Lake covered an area of seventy-four square miles, and was converted at a cost of one and a quarter millions sterling, or about twenty-seven pounds per acre. The land was immediately sold at an average price of forty-five pounds per acre, and is now worth not less than one hundred and seventy—a result which spoke eloquently to the keen commercial instincts of the Hollanders in favour of the new scheme. The site of the Haarlem Lake at the present day is intersected by a network of canals, and affords an abundant subsistence to its ten thousand inhabitants.

For the better understanding of the subject, a glance at the physical condition and history of the sea provinces of the Netherlands is necessary, and not uninteresting.

The low-lying coasts of Germany and Holland bordering on the North Sea are protected from the onslaughts of the waves by a double line of defences—one natural, the other artificial. The former consists of a chain of islets extending from the Zuider Zee to the Danish peninsula. These islets are the remains of the former coast-line. Ages ago, before the waters of the Atlantic broke through the neck of land connecting England with France, the German Ocean was a comparatively pacific body, and the adjacent coasts suffered little or no disintegration. The winds and the tides drove the sand along the coast into a number of hills or mounds at more or less regular intervals. Behind this hilly coast-line lay the marsh, swept by every tide, submerged at every flood, and yet not without inhabitants. The elder Pliny (50 A.D.) describes the region as one 'of which it is doubtful whether it be a part of the continent or an arm of the sea.' The Roman historian could not sufficiently express his surprise at finding the place inhabited; and indeed it is doubtful if in

any other part of the globe so desperate a struggle was ever carried on for so bare a subsistence. The dwellers gained their precarious living by such husbandry as could be wrought between the floods, and when these approached, retreated to the hillocks on which their dwellings were erected, and, for the rest, snatched a fickle diet of fishes from the retreating waters. One writer compared the life of these poor people during the floods to that of storm-tossed sailors in unseaworthy vessels, and their condition when the floods subsided to that of shipwrecked mariners.

At a far back geological period, what is now the English Channel was a solid belt of land, connecting France and Britain. And when, by subsidence of the land or otherwise, the Atlantic forced its way through this connecting belt, the North Sea underwent a great change. With the inrush of water through the newly-formed channel the waves of that Sea attained a force and turbulence which soon began to play havoc with the coasts. In a general way, the work of destruction was slow, though persistent; but all too frequently floods and storms of exceptional violence wrought terrible destruction. Large slices of the land were torn away and replaced by water. The Zuider Zee is the result of one of these terrific cataclysms; the Dollart and the Jahde basins similar—silent, but convincing evidences of their power of devastation. The hills and mounds alone offered any effectual resistance. The low ground between them first disappeared through the openings so formed; the seas entered, and found the land immediately behind an easy prey. To-day, all that remains of the ancient coast is the chain of small islands, already referred to, standing out and away from the mainland, like the skirmishers of an army, and providing a breakwater on which the first fury of the waves spends itself before reaching the dike. This dike, the second and artificial defence, is a formidable structure, averaging twenty feet in height, twelve feet in breadth at the top, and from ninety to one hundred feet at the base, and extends along the entire coast of West Friesland, a stretch of some hundreds of miles.

It is uncertain at what date the first dikes were built. Naturally enough, the initial attempts were defective and inefficient. Violent floods repeatedly broke through and over them, laying waste the land, and carrying death, desolation, and ruin to tens of thousands. One of the worst of these visitations occurred in the thirteenth century. A gale prevailing for several days from the same quarter drove the seas with extraordinary violence upon the dike, which at last gave way. Great areas of the country behind the dike were beneath the level of the sea, hence these became an easy prey to the destructive element. With frightful rapidity the storm-driven waves poured in a flood over the land, sweeping away everything in their path. Houses and gardens disappeared in the twinkling of an eye, and the largest trees were uprooted. In a short time an uncountable number of corpses, human and animal, floated hither and thither at the mercy of the flood. The fruitful land had become a sea, a sea with ebb and flow. When the waters subsided, the labour of repairing the defence was commenced; but internecine feud and petty

jealousies hindered and spoiled the work, and the next storm had but a feeble barrier to overthrow.

Some years subsequently the destroyer rushed in with all its fury again. Along the centre coast not fewer than thirty thousand persons perished. The destruction of property was only a degree less appalling. At the mouth of the Ems, a huge wedge of land forty square miles in extent, carrying fifty thriving villages and one prosperous town, was torn away.

Four centuries later, the great Christmas flood of 1717 burst into the devoted land. This inundation surpassed all others by the suddenness and violence of its onslaught. At the darkest hour of a winter's night, while the natives in fancied security were sleeping, a great deluge of water came over and through the dike. 'The flood came over the land,' said an eye-witness, 'not by degrees, as was usually the case, but from the first, shoulder high.' Three days and three nights passed before the flood began to subside. Over ninety per cent. of the buildings in the villages were swept away or destroyed. About eleven thousand persons and some one hundred thousand head of domestic animals perished. Many remarkable incidents are recorded of this flood. Houses were removed from one place to another without suffering any other damage. In one case the dwelling was floated away so tranquilly that the lamp remained lit, and the fowls were undisturbed on their perches. On another occasion two persons, man and wife, sought refuge on a haycock, and after drifting about all night in the greatest peril, reached a place of safety not only without loss of life but with gain. A child had been born during the terrible voyage.

Since the 'Christmas' flood, no calamity of anything approaching the same magnitude has occurred. The work of repairing, strengthening, and improving the dikes was at last taken up in a thorough and practical manner. The lessons of bitter experience have been used, and the dike of to-day is as near perfection as is possible. The whole structure is mapped out into parts, over each of which a searching and unceasing outlook is kept. The first sign of weakness is detected, and the necessary repairs immediately carried out.

It might be thought that the inhabitants of a land held so precariously, who have to offer a constant and unrelaxing resistance to the rapacity of the sea, would be content to do this successfully, satisfied to retain their own. The struggle is, however, vigorously carried into the aggressor's camp. Day by day, and foot by foot, the lost acres are being rewon. Since the thirteenth century in East Friesland alone, about five hundred square miles have at one time or another been torn away by storm and flood. On the other hand, three hundred square miles of cultivable soil have been added to this province, and this new land is, by the nature of its constituent elements, the most fertile in the country.

The composition of this new soil and the processes of its formation and deposit are subjects upon which there are some differences of opinion, but the most generally accepted theory is that embodied below. Twice a day the tide visits the coast, and at each visit leaves behind it a deposit

of solid matter, which settles on the foreshore. This substance is, according to one writer, the product of the meeting and mixing of the fresh water coming from the land through the 'Siele,' or locks which drain the ground, with the salt water of the North Sea. Analysis of the latter shows—owing, it is surmised, to the existence of extensive submarine beds of clay, calcareous earth, &c., in the vicinity of the coast—an abnormal amount of solid constituents. The deposit, however created, is extremely rich. It occurs most plentifully round about the mouths of the rivers and canals, and on those parts of the shore where vegetation is found, being caught and retained by the stems and branches of the plants. The efforts of the inhabitants are directed towards increasing the amount of this deposit, or, rather, towards retaining the greatest possible quantity of it. With this object, parallel rows of stakes are driven into the foreshore, outside, and running out at right angles to the existing dike. These stakes are connected and bound together by willow branches and twigs, the whole forming an enormous silt trap, which catches and keeps the tide's deposits.

Day by day, inch by inch, this material is increased and solidifies until it raises itself to the level of the tide. After a time a straggling vegetation appears; and when the entire surface reaches this condition, and its extent warrants the expenditure, it is enclosed by a new dike, and another piece of recovered land is added to the balance in favour of man. Another method, largely practised, is that of digging long trenches parallel to the shore, into which the deposit falls, to be subsequently shovelled landwards.

The great encouragement to the work is the exceptionally fruitful character of the soil so brought under cultivation. In the year 1559 a farmer who sowed some of the reclaimed land with five tons of barley harvested no fewer than three hundred tons. There are portions of the soil which have been ploughed and used for two hundred years without having been once manured, and still yield excellent results. The 'polders,' as the newly-won districts are called, are far and away the richest parts of the country, and to this fact is to be attributed the great prosperity of the farmers and graziers of these provinces. The present polders form an almost unbroken fringe, varying in depth, round the coast, the outline of which their increase is slowly but continually altering.

The process is of course a very gradual one; but when, as nowadays, the contest is all one-sided, and nothing is lost, while each day something is won, the increase of land is not inconsiderable. The enterprising spirit of the nineteenth century is not, however, to be confined to the methods of past ages, nor to be satisfied with the results which sufficed for earlier generations.

In essaying to enclose and drain the Zuider Zee—a task the magnitude of which can best be appreciated by a glance at the map—the Dutch prove themselves well abreast of the times. Three plans have been put forward, the most daring and comprehensive of which proposed to connect the chain of islands, Texel, Vlieland, Terschelling, and Ameland with each other, and with the mainland, by means of short dikes, a plan which on the map looks feasible enough, and,

considering the shortness of the dikes required, comparatively inexpensive. In this view, however, the projectors were greatly mistaken. The waters of the North Sea pour through the narrow openings between the islands with such force and fury that the channel beds have been worn to a great depth. Any attempt to dike these openings would not only be terribly expensive, but would probably end in failure.

The second scheme was much more modest. By it the small island Urk, in the middle of the Zee, was to be connected on the west with Enkhuizen, and on the east with the coast near the mouth of the Yssel. This plan was generally approved of as a preliminary measure; but before any real step could be taken, a fresh project was put forward which seemed to hit the happy medium between the two extremes, and has now been finally decided upon. By this project the island Wieringen is to be connected by a short dike with the west mainland, and on the opposite side by a longer dike with the coast of West Friesland, enclosing an area of some fourteen hundred square miles.

The longer dike will at first be a low one, in order that the ebb and flow of the tide over the enclosed area, while being diminished in speed and force, will not be entirely checked. A low and slowly moving tide facilitates the deposit of solid matter. With this fact in view, it is confidently anticipated that the low dike will initiate a mutual action and reaction, the retardation of the tide increasing the deposit, and gradually raising the bed of the Zee; the latter, in its turn, with every increase in height offering a greater resistance to the inflowing water, and by reducing its force, still further increase the deposit. By this operation the work will be carried on, so to say, automatically, until a certain level has been reached. When this stage is attained, the dike will be raised and solidified, and the work of draining the reclaimed land entered upon. This will be brought about by 'poldering,' a process already described, from which centuries of experience have removed the difficulties, and by means of which all the reclaimed lands on the coasts of East and West Friesland have been won. It is not to be expected that the land will ever reach a higher or even the same level as the neighbouring sea. Indeed, in rainy seasons the assistance of powerful pumping machinery will be indispensable for drainage purposes; and in places where the present bed of the Zuider Zee is very deep, small lakes must remain. Along the top of the dike, a railway will be constructed, establishing a means of speedy transit from one extremity of the country to the other, which will be not the least of the advantages of the project.

Turning to the financial side of the question, we find the estimate for the total outlay slightly exceeds sixteen millions sterling. For this sum a tract of land of about twelve hundred square miles, equal in area to one-tenth part of the entire present kingdom, peculiarly rich and fertile in quality, will be added to the food-producing soil of the country. Should the reclaimed land only realise fifty pounds per acre, a very modest estimate, the result will be a gain of considerably more than cent. per cent. on the outlay.

The future economical and political advantages

of the undertaking can scarcely be over-estimated. The Dutch are approaching the task with their customary phlegm and tranquillity. One hears little about it outside Holland, yet, whatever comes or goes, it must take rank as one of the greatest enterprises of modern days.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

CHAPTER IV.

THE result was that both Mr Godfrey and Mr Purvey came to dinner; and they all talked of this business they were interested in with lively, if sometimes pensive, expectation. The Squire pathetically regretted that coal-mining with its attendant industries 'make such a mess of the country'; but he recalled that not many hundreds of years ago all those regions were littered with charcoal-burning and iron-smelting, when the forests around were cut down, and the seat of the iron manufacture of England was in their midst; and Mr Purvey, with a business-like precision, remarked that the earth was made for man and not man for the earth, and that it is the duty of man to attend to his business.

Mr Godfrey said nothing to either of these views, except that he had always thought, and would maintain, that the industries of civilisation were conducted with far too much waste—reckless waste of both energy and material—and that carefully managed they need make very little 'mess.' And the best was that he and Miss Langland seemed to understand and sympathise with each other. The talk, you see, was more serious than dinner-talk commonly is, but there was a strong flavour of gratitude in it—gratitude of the French cynic's variety, which is inspired by the hope of favours to come. After dinner, however, they were all in lighter vein. Mr Purvey told the Squire engrossing tales of 'business'—in which the Squire took an unusual interest—of difficulties encountered and overcome, and of the supreme glories of twenty and thirty per cent.; and Mr Godfrey talked with the two girls, and played and sang with them in a most engaging manner—so that, when the evening came to an end and the girls were gone to their room, the younger expressed her delight to the elder in this wise: 'Oh, isn't he a nice man, Kitty?—and handsome too?—Oh, I believe I *could* love him!'

Whereupon Kitty hugged her sister close to her bosom.

From that day dated a period of delightful, feverish anticipation. In a day or two all the arrangements and appurtenances for boring were removed from Mr Purvey's ground to the top field of the Fairfield Farm. When the operation had been set going, the Squire climbed the hill to have a look, and came upon that sulky guardian of the door whom he had met once before.

'Well, my friend,' said the genial Squire, 'boring again—eh?'

'Yes, sir—boring,' answered the man.

'Not boring for water this time, though—eh?' said the Squire, with a knowing smile.

'No, sir—only boring,' and he went on his way; but he paused, reflected a moment, and then turned to say: 'Sometimes you bores for one thing, and gits another.' And then he went stubbornly on his way again.

And the boring went on steadily from day to day; and day after day the Squire was there and his daughter, and Mr Godfrey, and sometimes Mr Purvey; and so beset and bothered was the guardian of the door that he was fain to write upon its outward face in great chalk letters, 'No Admittance Except on Business.' But that did not deter his visitors from entering, and from examining with the supremest interest every cylinder of 'core' that was shown. This was such a soil, that was such another; this was chalk, and that was chalk again, and a third was chalk still. These were very nice, Kitty said; but why was there no coal yet? Mr Godfrey explained that coal could not possibly be reached for a certain depth, not until certain strata or layers of other things had been bored through; and Kitty admired his great but unassuming knowledge, and his serene patience and hope.

What made the expectation of the Squire and his daughter more feverish during this time was the impending necessity of making some kind of terms with Mr Purvey. The result of the Squire's visit to town had been an arrangement by which his friend Colonel Swetenham would buy up Purvey's mortgage with a mortgage of his own, provided that the Colonel's agent thought the farm carried value sufficient. The man had come down and looked over the farm, but as yet there had reached the Squire no definite 'Yea' or 'Nay.' And the Squire went to Mr Purvey to ask him to wait for some time longer before settling anything concerning either the mortgage or even its interest. Mr Purvey made no objection to that proposal.

'And of course,' observed the Squire, thinking it a civil and proper thing to say, 'we have not yet made the acquaintance of your son.'

The Squire was astonished at Mr Purvey's behaviour. He broke into an involuntary hiccup of a chuckle, smartly rubbed the knuckles of one hand in the palm of the other, smiled cheerfully to himself, and then smoothed out the smile with his lean fingers.

'But you will soon,' he said, at last looking at the Squire; 'I think I may say you will very soon.'

'What does the man mean by his smiles and chuckles?' thought the Squire, as he gazed upon him; but yet he suspected nothing, for he was occupied with the reiterated unwelcome promise of seeing Purvey's son—a prospect rendered more disagreeable than ever by the suspicion that his daughter had already conceived a liking for Mr Godfrey, who was now very frequently at the Manor House.

Both father and daughter therefore longed for the sight of coal; for that would determine the high value of the land, and in a moment resolve the complicated difficulty in which they were involved.

And at length the coal came—came in the shape of a small cylinder of compressed black powder, granulate and sparkling. The Squire and his daughter had waited more than an hour past luncheon-time to see it produced, and when they saw it they could have wept tears of joy. There was the fulfilment (in little) of all their hopes: the Squire saw himself disembarassed of debt, saw his lands again flourishing and productive, his favourite breed of pigs taking prizes at all the shows, and his dear daughter married to the man of her heart; and Kitty saw the necessity for parsimonious housekeeping gone, her father once more rosy and hearty, every one happy around her, and she herself happy—with whom? She glanced gratefully at Mr Godfrey, and experienced a strong desire to fling her arms about his neck. It was like the charm in the nursery story of the Old Woman and her Pig, the discovery of which set all the wheels of her existence going again smoothly and merrily.

'And we have you to thank for it!' exclaimed Kitty, impulsively giving Mr Godfrey her hand, and then blushing for her forwardness.

Mr Godfrey took her hand, gave it a tender, thrilling pressure, and blushed too.

'Don't think too much of this,' said he, however, in a tone of discreet warning: 'this is but the first show, and we may find that the measure is shallow and not worth the expense of working.'

But they did not heed him. They thought it was only his cautious, scientific way—merely 'his joke'; and they went home to eat their modest luncheon, radiant with content, and with the bloom of hope.

And now hear how the situation was precipitated.

The Squire wrote at once to his friend, Colonel Swetenham, telling of the momentous discovery, and saying that there could now be no doubt of the value of the farm, and that he would be glad if 'that business of the mortgage' could be carried through at once. That done, he felt as if the business *had* been carried through; and he rose in the mood to go at once and cast off Mr Purvey and all his works. But he probably would not have gone then had not some words from his daughter determined him.

'Oh, how I should like, father,' she exclaimed, with a quick flush—she had been in an excited, tremulous condition between red and white ever since the momentous discovery—'how I should like to run straight away to Mr Purvey and tell him that he must not think of me in connection with his son any more! I can't bear that he should have that connection in his mind one minute after I can help it!'

She was quite sure of herself, and sure also of Mr Godfrey; but even if she were not sure of him, she was certain that, having known him, she could never decline to the lower range of Mr Purvey's vulgar son.

'Why not, my dear?—why not?' exclaimed her father, rubbing his hands.

'No, father!' she said, in a sudden but evanescent impulse of shame and shyness. 'But shall we both go?—and—and you can tell him! Yes, let us go, and have done with it!'

So these two simple, unbusiness-like creatures set off incontinently to tell Mr Purvey that they could not entertain his proposal concerning his son on any account.

The nearer they got to the concrete villa the difficulty of delivering himself with perfect civility rose more and more upon the Squire. His steps lagged a little, and birds in the trees and beasts in the fields made him stop and expend an unusual amount of speculation on them: he would have liked to turn back, but he went obstinately on. At length they reached the concrete villa, and inquired for Mr Purvey. He was at home, and they were ushered into the Purveyan drawing-room—on Kitty's account, no doubt.

That drawing-room was Kitty's abhorrence. She had seldom sat in it, yet it always typified for her the abomination of desolation of taste: the contrasts of green rep and yellow satin and other crudities made her shudder. On this occasion, however, she had little time to shudder. Mr Purvey appeared with great promptitude, and a very polite, though somewhat astonished, welcome.

'It is seldom you do an old man this honour, Miss Langland,' said he.

'Well, you see, Mr Purvey,' began the Squire, rather ill at ease, shifting about as if his seat were extremely uncomfortable.

'Try this chair,' said Mr Purvey, offering him another.

'Thank you, thank you,' said the Squire; 'this will do very well: we must not be staying long.' And he finally established himself where he was. 'We have just come, Mr Purvey—we suddenly thought we would like to—on a semi-private, and—rather delicate matter.'

Mr Purvey all the while was bowing and smiling in gentle assent to all the Squire said, looking in ignorant wonder from him to his daughter. On the hint that there was something to be uttered of a 'semi-private' nature, he rose and asked Miss Langland if she would not like to look at a book of photographs on a table a pace or two off. Kitty took that remoter station, heartily wishing she had never come, and Purvey returned to listen to the Squire.

'Yes?' said he, clasping his hands in patient expectation.

'Well,' began the Squire, with a little constrained laugh, and in a low tone, which gradually rose to its normal level, 'my daughter is troubled by the—er—a proposal of yours, Mr Purvey, which I have communicated to her; it has worried and bothered her very much, especially of late. You—er—did me the honour, Mr Purvey, a little while ago, to suggest that we might accomplish an alliance between your son and my daughter.'

'I did make such a proposal,' said Mr Purvey, now quite alert; 'and you replied, Mr Langland, that you could say nothing to it until Miss Langland and my son should know each other.'

'I made that reply—yes,' said the Squire.

'But—well, perhaps I was foolish in telling my daughter your proposal; and, you know, Mr Purvey, there is nothing the female heart so much resents as having its affections arranged for.'

'Undisciplined!' murmured Mr Purvey gently, 'unchastened!'

'Well,' said the Squire, becoming obstinate, and by that token more at ease, 'perhaps so. But there the fact is; and the more she thinks of it and looks forward to it, the more the prospect displeases and distresses her. And—and now, Mr Purvey, she has asked me to come to you to thank you for the honour you have done her, but also to beg you to think of her in—in that light no longer. Besides,' said the Squire, dropping his voice, and feeling the advantage of a show of confidence, 'I believe—I have reason to think that she has bestowed her—er—affections on another.'

'Very likely,' replied Mr Purvey, also in a low voice.

The next moment the Squire sat surprised at the demeanour of Mr Purvey, and even Miss Langland raised her face from her book of photographs in astonishment. It could scarcely be said that Mr Purvey had laughed; for every muscle of his face was as gently and sweetly disposed in seriousness as usual. But certainly Mr Purvey had uttered a strange sound, something like a snigger, and yet more like the pleasant noise with which a horse welcomes the approach of his feed of corn.

'But in spite of that,' continued Mr Purvey at once, pinching his fingers in rapid succession, as if to make sure they were there, complete in number and condition, 'perhaps my son might have some chance, if he only had the pleasure of making Miss Langland's acquaintance.'

That reply was so unexpected, that the Squire gazed upon Mr Purvey and said not a word.

'I am not the man—God forbid!'—added Mr Purvey—'to come between any man and his affianced—a young lady; but this person at whose existence you hint may be only a—a casual interloper.—I beg,' said Mr Purvey, suddenly rising, 'that you will permit me to introduce my son to you and Miss Langland.'

'What?' exclaimed the Squire. 'Has he arrived, then?'

'Oh yes,' said Mr Purvey—and again there was that sound between a snigger and what Scots people call a 'nieher'—'he has arrived—arrived quite unexpectedly.'

The latter portion of this talk had been overheard by Miss Langland. She now closed her book of photographs, stood erect, and came towards Mr Purvey, with shame and entreaty striving together on her beautiful ingenuous face. 'Please, Mr Purvey,' she said, 'not now!—another time!—we must not stay!—we must go home!—Pray, excuse me now, Mr Purvey!'

In her eagerness she had laid her hand on Mr Purvey's arm to detain him. 'My dear young lady,' said Mr Purvey very impressively, 'if you do not let me make this introduction now, you—you will regret it!'

'Mr Purvey!' exclaimed the Squire in a temper closely bordering on anger. 'Do you permit yourself to threaten us?'

'Threaten you, my dear sir?' exclaimed Mr

Purvey in amazed innocence. 'Not at all!—not the least in the world!—Permit me.'

And ere either could say another word to detain him he was gone.

'CAXTON'-HUNTING.

THE heart of a violinist may be thrown into rapture by the discovery, in some out-of-the-way corner, of a genuine Stradivarius. But the rapture of the violinist is nothing compared with the ecstasy a bibliophile experiences when he finds an unknown book printed by Caxton and embedded in the dust of a forsaken college library. No wonder, for the value of Caxtons has increased marvellously during recent years. Not long ago, a book which came from the press of England's first printer fetched three thousand pounds. Although there are a considerable number of his prints about, not a single copy of many of his publications can be found. Editions, however, which have been despaired of by the hunter have turned up in the most unexpected manner. The late William Blades used to tell how he spent the time during a service in searching the library at the French Protestant Church, St Martin's-le-Grand. As with dusty face and grimed hands he was departing, a filthy bit of parchment in a pigeon-hole close to the fire attracted his attention by the appearance it presented of an illuminated initial. He turned it aside with his foot; and beneath was an old folio, the first sight of which made his heart beat. It seemed impossible, and yet it was a genuine Caxton, the second edition of Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales,' with numerous woodcuts. But how shorn of its beauty! True, original binding of nearly four centuries ago was there; but out of the three hundred and twelve leaves originally enclosed within the boards, scarcely two hundred were left, and they were torn and dirty. However, said Blades, it was a good hour's work; and the precious relic, each leaf of which was worth a guinea, was saved from lighting any more vestry fires.

It is in this way a large proportion of the known Caxtons have been unearthed. Probably, after years of searching, the long-sought-for book is obtained quite accidentally. Richard Heber, the sale of whose libraries in Paris, Brussels, London, Antwerp, Louvain, Leyden, and at the Hague occupied two hundred and two days, spent a large part of his life looking for a print by Colard Mansion, the first printer in Bruges. His efforts were not fruitful; but his brother, who was Bishop of Calcutta, managed to purchase a fine copy from a native on the banks of the Ganges. Caxton's 'Fifteen Oes,' now in the British Museum, lay for centuries in the dust of an old country-house. Henry Bradshaw of Cambridge, who was one of the most indefatigable of book-hunters, found an Indulgence, printed by Caxton, pasted inside a book in the Bedford town library. There are several

Caxtons in the Baptist Chapel at Bristol; and the famous vellum Caxton was found in a Roman Catholic seminary. Second-hand dealers are nowadays pretty sharp; but it is within the range of possibility to pick up a Caxton at a bookstall. Kind-hearted old Osborne, when he bought the Harleian collection, found he had fifty-six Caxtons at one time in his shop. To get rid of them, without any regard as to their rarity, he sold them at a fixed price—all folios twenty-one shillings; all quartos fifteen shillings. Sir Walter Scott makes Monkbarns tell the story of how 'Snuffy Davie'—who was David Wilson, a once well-known bookseller—bought for two-pence from a stall in Holland 'the Game of Chess' (1474), which was the first book ever printed in England. It was afterwards sold for one hundred and seventy pounds. Some years ago, in a cathedral town, a second-hand bookseller exposed a copy of Caxton's Statutes affixing a card, 'Only 2s. 6d.' For some time it lay unnoticed. One day, however, the attention of a gentleman was attracted, and he, knowing something about early printing, soon became the owner of the book. He valued it more than its weight in bank-notes.

Is it possible to find any more Caxtons? will be the question cropping up in the mind of the reader. Undoubtedly. The difficulty, however, is to distinguish the genuine article when it is seen. This, however, can be easily overcome. Let the Caxton-hunter remember one or two things. He will never find one of Caxton's books with a title-page. Title-pages were unknown till after 1491. There must be no Roman or italic lettering, but all in Gothic or Old English. There must be no commas, but an oblique stroke in their place. Further, there must be no catch-words at the bottom of a page. The use of these, long gone out of fashion, did not come into vogue till years after Caxton's death. There are other tests necessary, such as the measurement of lines, for some of the type used was imitated pretty closely by Caxton's successors. It is clear, however, that during his career Caxton only used six kinds of type. The first, distinctly foreign in its character, was used by him at Bruges in the printing of 'The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye,' and in the first edition of 'The Game and Playe of the Chesse.' This style was never used in England. The second style, such as in 'The Moral Proverbs,' and 'Tulle of Olde Age,' printed in 1477 and 1481 respectively, was beautiful and artistic. It follows a design of manuscript which obtained the name of Gros Batarde, common in use in the fifteenth century. Several books were written in this manner under the order of Edward IV., and are now to be seen in the British Museum. Looking at the dates when Caxton's books were issued and the types he used, it is evident he did not make new type till the old was worn out. A pretentious style came next in 1483, very bold in its character. It is problematical whether there is a book in this type; the only examples we have of it at present are in headlines. With a little

previous study, the Caxton-hunters could at a glance recognise these three styles.

It would not, however, be so easy respecting the type used in 'Polychronicon,' 'Death-bed Prayers,' and 'The Book of Fame.' This is very closely followed by printers of a subsequent date. As far as is known, very few books are in the style of 'The Royal Book,' published in 1485. The pattern is somewhat Dutch; but among other books in which it is used is 'The Book of Good Manners.'

The last style of type Caxton employed was small, and not being imitated so much by other printers, would be fairly easy to recognise. Trade-marks were in use in the early days of printing just as they are now, and Caxton in some of his later prints put a mark. To find this trade-mark in a book is not a guarantee he printed it, for his successors adopted in their publications one rather like it. It is, however, comparatively easy to distinguish the imitation.

Some of the most important of Caxton's works are yet to be found. There is not a known book of his printed in 1486 and 1488. It is not likely he ceased printing during these two years. We know there are missing books because Caxton himself in the preface to 'The Golden Legende' mentions 'XV bookes of Metamorphoseos in whyche ben conteyned the fables of Ouyde,' but about which nothing whatever is known. Neither has anything been discovered of his translation of 'The Lyfe of Robert Erle of Oxenford.' There are indications of the mania again coming upon us of collecting old editions, just as in our youth we spend all our pocket-money in foreign and rare stamps. At the commencement of the century there was a great demand for ancient volumes, but the fever gradually died out. There is an historical interest in finding out Caxtons. It is not the 'dead rubbish of a dead generation' we are dealing with when we turn over the leaves of the 'Knight of the Tower' or the 'Confessio Amantis.' In these days of excellence, it is refreshing to turn to the rude letters, the irregular pages, the want of initial letters, and so on. At the end of his translation of 'The History of Troy' we are told Caxton's eyes 'were dimmed with overmuch looking on the white paper; that his courage was not so prone and ready to labour as it had been; and that age was creeping on him daily and enfeebling his body: that he had practised and learnt at his great charge and expense to ordain this said book in print after the manner and form as we see it; and that it was not written with pen and ink as other books be.' It was quite usual for the early printers to put something of this kind at the end of their books. For instance, Faust and Schoffer of Mentz stated their works 'were not drawn or written by a pen, as all books had been before, but made by a new art and invention of printing, or stamping them by characters or types of metal set in forme.'

However much we may crave after Caxton's books in this latter end of the nineteenth century, some of the dignitaries did not look upon the innovation of printing with kindly eyes four hundred years ago. Bishop Bale suggestively referred to Caxton as a 'man not quite stupid, nor benumbed with sloth.' The rummager amongst old books will be very glad if even after

several years' searching he brings to the light a genuine Caxton. They are not in every garret, but there must be copies in many garrets, being eaten by the worms and slowly destroyed by the damp. May they soon be rescued!

A TALE OF A DARTMOOR FOG.

My grandfather, Jacob Brewer, of Stitchworthy, near Chagford, Devon, had but one remarkable episode in his long life. Such as it was, however, it must have made a very great impression on him. He was a farmer of a class now extinct, or nearly so, in England, owning, as his ancestors had owned for several generations, the estate of Stitchworthy, on Dartmoor. He had at the time I speak of attained the dignity of a Justice of the Peace, and being possessed of a superior education to the general run of 'country justices' in those days, acquitted himself with much credit, and had sent his son to study the law at Exeter.

It fell out that one day, in the beginning of September 1813, he had occasion to visit the fair at Widdicombe, renowned in Devonshire song. My grandfather having concluded a bargain for certain sheep, was invited by the seller, as the one inn was crammed to suffocation, to come to his house near by to clench the bargain in the time-honoured way. They fell to talk of things agricultural, and then of the war, somewhat regardless of time, till at length the tall kitchen clock startled my grandfather by slowly clanging four.

'Hallo!' he exclaimed, starting up; 'I never thought it was so late. I should have been half-way back by now;' and taking a hasty leave of his host, he mounted his famous chestnut mare Jenifer (west-country for Guinevere), rode up a steep stony lane which brought him to the open moor, and ascended the slopes of Hamil Down. Now Hamil Down, or Hamildon, is a gigantic ridge of granite some three miles long, forming one side of the vale of Widdicombe. Its wide level top is seventeen hundred feet above the sea; and the view from the great barrow which marks its centre is as strange and picturesque a one as can be found in England. Almost due west, on the horizon at the foot of a rounded hill, were some whitish patches; these were the great prison barracks of Princetown, where many hundreds of prisoners of war were kept. My grandfather reflected on this with no other feeling than one of deep gratitude to Providence that they were safely bestowed there, instead of working their will on his person and property.

As he proceeded, there lay right below him, in a deep scoop of the down between two tors, what seemed a huge 'fairy ring' on the boggy ground. This was Grimspound, supposed to be an ancient fort, and consisting of a rude embankment of great boulders and earth, overgrown with bracken. My grandfather proceeded to ride through it, and just as he passed the entrance, Jenifer shied, and a man suddenly rose from the ditch, and stood, apparently undecided whether to run or not. He was a well-made, good-looking young fellow of about seven-and-twenty, of very dark complexion, in seaman's attire, dirty and muddy, as from rough travelling, and there was a dark patch or stain on his coat on the left side. He stood for

a minute with a half-alarmed, half-savage expression on his face—which often revisited my grandfather in his dreams—before he spoke.

'Beg your honour's pardon,' he said; 'but I took you for a highwayman, and thought it best to keep out of sight if I could.'

'Highwayman, indeed!' said my grandfather. 'Not a very likely place to meet one, where there are no highways.—But what are you doing here?'

'That's easily told, your honour,' said the sailor, with an air of more confidence. 'I'm a sailor, as you see, mate of the brig *Nereus*, from Jamaica to Plymouth. We came into port last week; and I went to Tavistock first, to see some friends, and then started to tramp across to Teignmouth, where my home is; but trying a short-cut I was told of, I've got clean out of my reckoning. If your honour could put me on the track, it would be a favour.'

'Humph!' said my grandfather. 'If you are for Teignmouth, you have a longish walk yet; and you'll never find your way to Moreton tonight.—Look here, my man; you seem an honest fellow. If you follow me, you can have a supper and a shake-down in the barn, and reach Chagford as early as you like in the morning. Though there are no highwaymen about, there are fellows whose room is better than their company on the Moor at night.'

'Much obliged to your honour,' said the sailor, picking up a stick and bundle, such as men of his calling generally travelled with ashore.

'You seem to have been hurt,' said my grandfather, eyeing the stain on the man's coat.

'Yes, your honour; we had a brush with a Yankee privateer just after leaving Kingston. We beat her off; but I got a poke with a boarding-pike, and it's not healed yet.'

They had proceeded but a short distance, when a horseman appeared coming towards them, in whom my grandfather recognised his 'hind' or baillif, Johnny Truscott.

'The mistress hev sent me out to look for 'ee, Squire,' said he as he rode up. 'She do be terrible oneasy about 'ee all day. Some of they pris'ners got away last night; we heard 'm shootin' off signal-guns up to Princetown. You hev'n't surely catched one of 'm?' as he noticed the not very reputable plight of the young sailor.

'No; not this time,' said my grandfather.—'But what do you see, Johnny?' for he was gazing hard towards Grimspound.

'Two men, Squire, lookin' at us over the far side o' the pound. They've dropped down now; but I seen 'm so plain as the nose on your face. Shall us go an' look at 'm, sir?—maight be some o' they pris'ners.'

'No,' said my grandfather, after consideration. 'If they are, I don't quite see how we are going to capture them without arms.—You see'—to the sailor—'the bad company I told you of was nearer than we thought.'

'Drat they pris'ners!' said Truscott; 'I wish they'd take an' smother the lot in Cranmere so fast as they catches 'm.'

Ere long they had reached my grandfather's homestead; and consigning the stranger to the care of Truscott, my grandfather entered the house.

Stitchworthy stood on a rising ground between

two moorland streams. South and east were fields, studded with granite bosses, and enclosed by granite walls thick-grown with fern and fox-glove; but north and west was the primeval Moor, and, overlooking all, Kestor with its grim square fort-like summit. The house itself, a massive stone building with a seventeenth-century date over the door, formed one side of a terribly 'mucky' farmyard, the other sides consisting of cowsheds and farm-buildings.

'Jacob, how came you to be so careless as to leave your pistols behind?' demanded my grandmother.—'And who's that you've brought with you?'

My grandfather related the story in as few words as possible, while struggling out of his boots.

His wife seemed but half satisfied. 'Well, Jacob, of course you couldn't leave the man to get lost; but since he came so far, he might just as well have gone to Chagford.'

'I don't see that, my dear. Four miles of as bad a track as ever called itself a road, to go over in the dark, and perhaps those two fellows on the watch for him.'

'It's no use my talking, I know, Jacob; but you ought to be more careful, now you're a Justice, and not believe every plausible tale that vagabonds tell you.—I'm sure we're getting to be a regular house of call for them, and the people you take on at harvest keep me in a twitter till they're off the place.'

'There's no occasion to twitter about the sailor, my dear. You won't see him again.—Let's have supper, please, for I'm rather sharp set.'

During the progress of the meal, frequent sounds of merriment reached their ears from the direction of the men's quarters, as if the visitor were making himself entertaining; but early hours were then the rule, and by half-past eight every one was, or was supposed to be, asleep.

About ten, my grandfather was awakened by his wife shaking him; and sitting up in bed, he was aware of a great disturbance among the dogs. The big mastiff had set up a thundering baying; old Kanter, the Exmoor staghound, joined in with his deep-mouthed music; and 'the little dogs and all' added a chorus, rousing the geese into frantic screechings. In some annoyance, he hustled on the most necessary garments, and loading a ponderous double flintlock, which would have made a modern sportsman's back ache to look at, made his way down-stairs and into the yard. Truscott, two labourers, and the sailor were already in the yard, and the forces, human and canine, sallied out. Dividing into two parties, they made a circuit of the premises; but when they met, no one had seen anything. The Moor lay black around in the shadow of Longridge and Kestor, save where the stone walls showed ivory white in the moonlight, and no sound could be heard except the brook rattling over its stony bed. Presently the distant hoot of a tawny owl broke the stillness, then another in answer, seemingly close by. The dogs growled and sniffed the air inquiringly. A thick bank of cloud was beginning to draw over the moon. Something was said about 'piskies,' and it was evident that neither Truscott nor the men cared about getting out of sight of the house.

'It's too bad, it is,' said my grandfather, 'to

be dragged out of bed in this way, an' not even get a shot.'

'Shoot thicky owl, Squire,' said the younger of the men, grinning.

'What do you mean, Sam?' said my grandfather.

'Gypsies do call to rich other laike owls at night, Squire. Just fore you comed back, or it might be a hour, I zee dree on 'em crassin' the Moor to'ards Vitifer.'

'There's been a braave lot of 'm camped over to Belstone, since Okehampton cattle fair, so I heard,' said the other man.

Now, my grandfather, though, as we have seen, not inclined to be hard on masterless men in general, made an exception in the case of gypsies, to whom he had as great an aversion as an Australian squatter to 'myall blacks.' It was with some irritation that he observed to Truscott: 'Those were the men you saw, no doubt. I wonder what they were watching us for? No good, of course.'

'This little enough good they have about 'em,' said Truscott. — 'Reckon, Jack, he added, addressing the sailor, 'twas lucky for 'ee Squire and I happened to come up.'

The rest of the night passed without event; and in the morning, my grandfather, having rather overslept himself, found Truscott awaiting orders.

'He's clane gone, Squire. Sam slept in the loft with 'm an' never heard 'm go; but 'tis aisier to wake a hedgyboar [hedgehog] at Christmas than to wake Sam.'

'Aw! but he were a funny chap! Tell 'ee what, Squire, he weren't such a stranger in these parts as what he do make out.'

'What makes you think so?'

'Cause,' replied Truscott, 'we never had to say nothin' over again to 'm, same as we does to a foreigner, or even a Plymouth or a Exeter man.'

At this minute Sam came up, and, touching his hat, held out something. 'Found this in the straw, Squire, where thicky sailor chap laid las' night,' said he, exhibiting a round metal box, such as was then used instead of a tobacco pouch, having scratched on it a rude likeness of an eagle and the letters G. D.

'Right, Sam,' said my grandfather, weighing it in his hand. 'Silver, too. He'll most likely come back for it. If he does, John, tell him to ask the mistress for it;' and having given sundry directions and hastily breakfasted, he mounted and set off for the meet of the otter hounds at Post Bridge. When the sport was over, my grandfather returned to Post Bridge with most of the mounted contingent, amongst whom were several officers of the Princetown guard. As they rode on, scraps of conversation reached his ears which caused him to listen with more attention.

'When the winter sets in, there won't be much chance for escapes.'

'If I were in his place, I should pray for an early one. He'll be superseded if many more get away.'

'I doubt if the fellow will be caught. He must know the country, and there are too many tramping sailors about for him to attract much notice.'

'Is it a prisoner you are talking about, gentlemen?' said my grandfather. 'Perhaps I can give you some information;' and he recounted the events of the previous day.

'That's the man, without doubt,' said the officer addressed. 'A renegade, sir, one of the crew of the Yankee brig *Pocahontas*, who've given us more trouble than all the rest. The night before last, he and a dozen more got out by digging under the wall, bound and gagged a sentry, though he says he got his bayonet into this fellow; and as yet only six have been caught. His name is George Dousland, as we found out by means of an uncle of his who lives at Tavistock, and who recognised him at the market. The old man nearly went into a fit with rage, for this scoundrel had formerly robbed and nearly killed him.'

'Well, gentlemen,' said my grandfather, 'it's my duty as a Justice to assist you; and if you will send a party to my place, I will put you on the track, as far as I can.'

'Very good, Mr Brewer,' said the officer. 'I'm afraid they could hardly get there to-day in time to do any good; but you may expect them early in the morning.'

On arrival at Post Bridge, the military cantered off towards Princetown, and the rest turned into the inn for a parting glass before going their ways. Amongst them was Hannaford, the host of the *Three Crowns* at Chagford, who had heard what had passed.

'Aw dear!' he exclaimed to my grandfather, when they were sitting in the inn parlour, 'to think o' Jarge Dousland comin' to this.'

'You know him, then?'

'Iss, Squire. I knew'd him well to Tavistock eight year ago, an' his uncle ould Hendry too; but what I never knew'd was the man that had a good word to say for him—the uncle, I mean. This boy, this Jarge Dousland, came to live with him when he was about fifteen. Ould Hendry used him cruel bad first along; but latterly he found 'twas no use; he cudn't make him do anythin' he didn't want to do. He wudn't do no work at the mill, nor nowhere, without he had a fancy; an' he was allus roamin' the country an' soshiatin' with poachers an' gypsies an' such like. Last, when he were about twenty year old, one night ould Hendry thought he heard thieves, an' goes down an' finds Jarge along with a gypsy; an' the short of it was ould Hendry got pretty near killed afore help comed. I reckon it didn't come too quick either, for his men weren't fonder of him than other folks. Jarge wasn't to be heard of next day; an' though there was a 'sa'lt-an'-buttery warrant out, 'twas no good, for he'd got to Plymouth, an' was to sea on a king's ship long before his uncle end see out of his eyes. —That was spring of the year Lord Nelson died; an' till to-day, I never heard word of him.'

My grandfather was very wroth at hearing these particulars. The ships of the American navy, which had inflicted several reverses on us, were very largely, in some cases entirely, manned by British deserters. That he himself should have given aid and assistance to one of them seemed a personal disgrace. 'If it had been a Frenchman, or even a real Yankee,' he soliloquised as he rode home, 'I shouldn't have cared so much.'

But an English renegade! It shan't be my fault if they don't catch him, if I lose another day. The worst of it is, I shall never hear the last of it from the wife.' And indeed he never did.

Next morning, the weather had changed, and a westerly breeze was sending heavy clouds rolling across the Moor, sweeping its surface with ragged curtains of mist and fine rain. My grandfather had come in from superintending a haystack which was getting heated, and was breakfasting in the kitchen, where provision had been made for the expected officer and men from Princetown. Suddenly, Ranter got up and trotted growling to the door; the gate clashed, and a trample of hoofs, with a clink and jingle, was heard approaching.

'Here they are!' he exclaimed. 'Get the flask filled, my dear, and the big cloak; yes, and the pistols, and a blunderbuss, and a cutlass, and all Robinson Crusoe's outfit, if it will make you any easier in your mind. Tell Sam to saddle the gray; I won't risk Jenifer among the mires; and he issued forth to meet the party. They consisted of an officer, who introduced himself as Lieutenant Macmorris, four dragoons, and a civilian, who, my grandfather instinctively felt, must be no other than Hendry. He felt disgusted with the conduct of a man who could thus come out to hunt his own nephew, however bad he may have been.

'Good-morning, Lieutenant,' said my grandfather. 'Come in and get something to eat, you and your men.'

The person introduced as Mr Hendry was a tall, wiry man of fifty or so, with hard gray eyes under bushy eyebrows, and a very long upper lip. He was attired in the heavy boots and breeches and long-skirted coat of the period—all rather the worse for wear; and his steed, a vicious-looking black mare, seemed not to suffer from overfeeding or grooming. He bowed stiffly to Mrs Brewer, shook hands with my grandfather, and exclaimed with an affected jocularity which sat very ill on him: 'Well, sir, d'ye think we shall run him to earth? Scent's rather cold, hey?'

'Won't you sit down to breakfast?' said my grandfather. 'We may have a long ride before us, and a damp one.'

'To be sure, to be sure,' said Hendry; and seating himself opposite to the Lieutenant, who was making alarming ravages on the fried bacon, commenced eating with a great display of appetite. It was not long, however, before he pushed away his plate and exclaimed: 'Isn't it nearly time to start, Lieutenant?'

On being questioned by the officer, my grandfather gave it as his opinion that the runaway would most likely have made for the gypsy camp at Belstone.

'Iss, Squire,' said Truscott, who had entered. 'Twas they owls fled away with 'm, sure enough. Depend 'pon it, they chaps that we saw to the Pound was along with 'm when you comed on 'm, but he cudn't get away so quick as they.'

'I suppose that was it,' said my grandfather. 'But as to Belstone, I can show you a way there in about seven miles, but you will have to follow me close, for it's a rough track, and the mires are very soft just now.'

As soon as they were mounted—'Now,' said my grandfather, pointing with his whip to the

huge round bulk of Cawsand Beacon, looming through the mist, 'that hill is where we must make for, and—' 'Hullo!' The exclamation was caused by the conduct of Hendry's mare, which no sooner felt her rider in the saddle, than, with a vicious jerk of her head, she got the bit in her teeth, and dashed off in the direction of Chagford, cannoning against my grandfather's old gray and nearly capsizing him. Though old Hendry sat firmly enough, it was only at a high stone wall that he could check her. 'Upon my word,' said my grandfather, rubbing his leg, as the runaway rejoined them, 'you must take care, Mr Hendry, that she doesn't play these tricks where we're going, or we may have the job of fishing you out of a mire.'

Hendry apologised to my grandfather, who replied: 'No harm done, sir; let's push on; and the interrupted march was resumed.

The wind had died away, and the mist was gathering round with a fine drizzle as they paced over the scrubby heather of the granite-strewn Moor, now passing a circle of upright stones, rising gray and solitary from a hill-side, now an overthrown 'kistvaen,' and now a long double line of rough blocks leading nowhere. By-and-by the fog settled down in earnest; and when they gained the top, and drew rein to let the horses breathe, they could see little beyond one another and the ground they stood on.

It was indeed the thickest fog that my grandfather could remember in all his experience; and though it was near ten o'clock of a September day, and he knew well where he was, he had to proceed as carefully as if it had been midnight. Suddenly, a great pile of rocks appeared to start out of the fog.

'Ha! here's White Hill!' he exclaimed. 'We're only a little way out. To the right, and then straight on again, will get us there in an hour, or less.—Now, Mr Hendry, straight on after me, if you please.—Why, what do you see, man?'

Old Hendry, without heeding the question, had reined up, and was staring fixedly before him, with such an expression of concentrated rage on his hard-lined face, as, considering the absence of any cause for it, amazed the beholders.

Before the question could be repeated, he spoke in a low strained voice, without turning his head: 'There, there he is—running and mocking at us!'

No one spoke, but every one stared at the impenetrable white blank in front. Before another word could be said, the black mare plunged, threw up her heels, and horse and rider vanished like the picture on a lantern screen when the slide is pulled out.

My grandfather, who alone realised the danger, was speechless with dismay for an instant, then, clapping his hands to his mouth, bawled with all his might: 'To the right—to the right, man! Throw yourself off, if you can't stop her!'

The rapidly receding thud of hoofs in a mad gallop down hill was the only answer. To ride after would have been sheer insanity, for nothing could be seen ten yards off, and the ground was strewn with angular lumps of granite, hidden in the heather. How the mare kept her legs for an instant, was, my grandfather used to say, the

greatest mystery in the affair. Suddenly the sound ceased.

'He's stopped her,' said the Lieutenant.—'But hear that!' as a scream, harsh, thrilling, and fearfully prolonged, came ringing up from below. 'Tis the horse. Many's the time I've heard it in Spain.'

'He may have thrown himself off,' said my grandfather, wiping his face, which was damp with more than fog. 'The best way is to leave a man here with the horses, and go down in a line as far apart as we can see each other.'

They did so; and in a few minutes, one of the soldiers picked up Hendry's hat; but no further discovery was made; and presently the peat began to squish under their feet, and my grandfather called a halt.

'No farther,' said he, taking up a large stone and pitching it a few yards in front, where it disappeared with a gulping sound and a jelly-like quivering of the surface. 'I daren't try to skirt the pool in this weather. We must search up hill again to find him, if he is above ground, which I doubt.'

But when, after half an hour's searching and shouting, no traces were found, and they arrived at their starting-place, much to the relief of the man left with the horses, they came to the dismal conclusion that Hendry was beyond help, and that nothing remained but to proceed. Just as they moved off, the corporal exclaimed: 'Here he comes, sir!' as a horseman on a black horse broke through the fog; but next instant my grandfather recognised the rider as a man named Prowse, a Moorman, living at Belstone.

'What! is it you, Squire?' said he. 'What be doin' this side long o' they sajers, and what be all the scrachin' about?—Aw! but I were glad to hear it, for I'd got fair 'mazed; I never see the like o' this fog!'

'He be gone, right enough,' he remarked when he heard of the event. 'Same as Phairy in the Red Sea. The pool be that full now, a plover cudn't hardly settle on 'm. Gypsies? Iss, sure. There was a parcel o' them to Higher Tor; but they moved off this mornin'. Seem'th there was a chap with 'm, not one o' theirselves, a sort o' trampin' sailor, an' last night he died.' (My grandfather started.) 'They say as how he was hurted 'fore he comed to them, an' his wound broke out an' bled 'm to death in his sleep; but three on 'm 's in custody, an' the crowner is comin' from Okehampton for to hold a inquest.'

A breeze sprung up at this moment; the fog lifted considerably, and they were able to proceed more rapidly. Much discussion ensued. My grandfather owned that he had seen and heard nothing, neither had the Lieutenant; and, but for Hendry's strange speech and looks, it would have seemed merely a case of a bolting horse. But the corporal thought he saw 'something'; whereupon one of the men affirmed that he also saw 'summat,' but he thought 'it didn't look like a man;' which enabled another man to recollect hearing something 'like a voice callin'.'

When they reached the hamlet of Belstone, a little crowd of people were clustered about the one public-house, who raised a buzz of astonishment at the sight of the party. The Lieutenant having explained their errand, they were ushered

into a sort of barn at the back, where, on a table extemporised of planks on trestles, lay stiff, shrunk, and white, the remains of the luckless George Dousland. The three gypsies in custody were two men, and a woman, who sat crouched on a bench, her sullen black eyes fixed on the body.

The horses being quite knocked up, my grandfather offered the party his hospitality for the night. In the morning, he bethought him of the silver tobacco box, and being in some doubt whether it might not be considered spoil of war, he handed it to the Lieutenant, who accepted it with many thanks.

No trace of Hendry was ever found; but, years after, when the prison stood empty and deserted, my grandfather was called to Plymouth on legal business. As he walked on the Hoe, he encountered his former acquaintance, Lieutenant, now, thanks to the chances of war, Major Macmorris, who welcomed him with effusion, and insisted on taking him to his quarters in the Citadel. There he produced the box, flattened by a bullet as it lay in his waistcoat pocket at Waterloo, remarking: 'So you see, Mr Brewer, if that little excursion you took us was the death of one man, it was the means of saving the life of another.'

NEST-BUILDING EXTRAORDINARY.

THOSE who go Bird-nesting would scarcely be expected to look in spouts of pumps, hands of statues, interiors of letter-boxes in use, in street lamps, old shoes, hats, or still less in human skulls, to add to their egg-collections. Yet all such curious and fanciful selections have at times been made by feathered architects as sites for the erection of the temporary nurseries which are to guard their young ones. How the tender fledglings are reared, often under extraordinary disadvantageous circumstances, is amazing. A large number of birds, for example, conceived an affection for the newly-erected battle-ship *Victory*, in the Isle of Man Exhibition grounds, and built their nests there. Inside the figure-head, a pair of blackbirds started housekeeping, and four eggs soon lay in their soft nest. More curious still was it to find that a feathered pair had made their nest inside the tiny hull of a model ironclad, and liked the situation so much, that although the hull was overhauled and painted and carted on wheels to the lake-side, the attentive mother never deserted her eggs. What may be mentioned as a peculiar coincidence in connection with this part of our subject was the discovery of a robin's nest in the mizzen-mast of Nelson's ship, the *Victory*, part of which mast is still preserved in the grounds of Bushey House. It was shot right through at Trafalgar, and in the hole thus made a pair of robins built their nest and reared a brood of young ones.

Robins in particular seem fond of odd nesting-places. A nest with three eggs was lately extracted from one of the old George IV. lamps in St James's Park, London. Another of these birds had the audacity to build a nest in a black-

smith's shop close to where horses are shod, and hatched its eggs, undisturbed by the din of hammers or the flying sparks from the forge. Two other robins chose a paper bag which was hung up in a greenhouse in Buxton, built their nest in it, and reared six small robins therein, coming to and fro through a broken pane. Being regarded as a curiosity, the nest was preserved by skilfully propping the bag to support the weight. A veritable nest-tower, built by a pair of these birds, was once found by an egg-collector. As each attempt appeared to turn out unsatisfactory, one new nest after another was built over the last, till five were completed before this fastidious couple were contented to begin housekeeping.

Sparrows are proverbially audacious. Two recently reared their frail habitation in a railway signal-box, unmindful of the various noises resulting from shunting the trains. A train used to make a daily run carrying a blackbird's nest and eggs amongst the woodwork underneath one of the carriages. Upon unloading a railway wagon filled with limestone at St Helens, a nest with five perfect eggs was found which looked like a blackbird's. A similar find was made in a coal-wagon at Banbury. The nest had probably been carried from Cannock Chase pits, and must have bewildered the birds by its sudden disappearance. In a hole in one of the buffers of a railway carriage making daily excursions between Thorpe and Clacton-on-Sea, a tom-tit made its nest and hatched the eggs, in spite of the frequent violent concussions when the carriage was shunted. These usually timid creatures appear to get as accustomed to shocks and loud noises as do people to earthquakes and hurricanes. Imagine any one looking for a nest in the ammunition box of a gun-carriage; yet a bird once built one there, nor was it frightened away by the daily firing of that weapon. Two sparrows which built in the slot of a railway signal-post were quite unconcerned at the moving up and down of the arms, which in consequence raised and lowered the nest as though it were on the waving branch of a tree.

Some men sawing through an elm-tree discovered in the middle of it a bird's nest containing five perfect eggs. The tree, fifteen inches in diameter, was quite sound except just round the nest, and is supposed to be more than one hundred years old. Another curiosity in this line was worthy of its place in the local museum, for it was a bird's nest made wholly of long spiral steel shavings, without the least particle of vegetable fibre. It was found in Switzerland at a place which is the centre of a large watch-manufacturing district.

Your egg-collector would scarcely think of climbing to the top of a blast furnace, or of descending a coal-pit, after the many speckled and coloured objects of his search; yet on the top of one of the unused furnaces near Ardrossan, a pigeon's nest with three eggs was discovered; and the bottom of a shaft near Airdrie had taken the fancy of a starling, which returned next day to the strange place of its choice, after being taken to the surface.

The eider-ducks of the Norway coast, birds from

which the soft and warm eider-down is produced, are very hard to suit in the matter of selecting building sites for their broods' homes. It is not unusual for a duck, after examining all likely spots out-of-doors, to march boldly into a house and coolly select what she considers a suitable place for her nest, such as the oven, if it happens to be unused at the time. The human inmates of the house welcome her gladly, supply her with food, and cheerfully submit to any small inconveniences like the temporary loss of their oven, for they know that their guest will pay a good price for her board and lodging. After finishing the nest, made of sticks and grass, the eider-duck plucks the soft down from her breast and makes a wonderful mat, which rises so far above the edge of the nest, that it can be folded over the eggs when the duck goes away in search of food.

LEAVES.

THE leaves came forth in the early Spring;
They heard the call of birds on the wing;
The soft white snow had wrapped them warm
From the biting frost—from the bitter storm,
And they whispered at touch of the sunbeam's kiss:
'What a very beautiful world is this!'

Yes, the gay young leaves had a glorious time
Dancing all day to the south wind's chime;
The dewdrops bathed them through summer night,
Then turned to diamonds with morning light,
And the world looked bright through the radiant gleam,
The beautiful world of a fairy dream.

The leaves grew strong in sunshine and shower,
That curved and rounded them hour by hour;
Their green took many a lovely shade,
As the wind with the sunbeams fluttered and played;
No scars defaced them, no rents were seen,
No tinge of russet among the green.

Bright were the woods while the summer smiled,
But the rains and winds of autumn were wild;
Some leaves at end of the year remained—
Ah! they were broken and bruised and stained;
The green was faded, the fair mould lost;
'Twas the work of the rain, the storm, the frost.

And thus it is at the close of life;
Heart after heart worn out with strife,
Passion and pain have left their trace
On the bowed-down form, on the careworn face;
There will come fresh leaves when winter is o'er,
But the green to the old leaf returns no more.

And dark it would be, our brief youth past,
But for hope of a Spring that will ever last,
When the green comes back to a fadeless leaf,
When the scars are healed, and the rents of grief,
At rest from storms of sorrow and strife,
Are the beautiful leaves of the Tree of Life!

MARY GORGES.

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A COLOSSAL MAP.

THE little but expressive word Map, that now sums up in the compass of three letters such a vast treasure-house of geographical knowledge, has only had abiding-place in our language since the middle ages. The word itself in its literal signification carries us back to the time when maps were painted on linen or cloth. For 'mappa mundi,' from which the abbreviated 'map' is derived, signifies neither more nor less than 'world-napkin'—that is, a cloth on which was painted a representation of some portion of the disc of the earth.

With the Greeks, the map was a picture; among the Romans, a 'tabula'—that is, a table or list. Much as the first-named people did to develop the scientific construction of maps, it is to the ancient Egyptians that the honour of the first maps must be assigned. Very crude were these primeval attempts at cartography, made as they were fourteen centuries before the Christian era. They were maps only by courtesy, being, in fact, pictures of a stretch of landscape in some cases; and in others, pictures hieroglyphically treated of the more salient features of a State or some portion of it. But still the papyrus rolls contain the beginnings from which has developed the science of map-making as practised at the present day.

Anaximander, a pupil of Thales, who flourished about 560 B.C., showed on his maps not only the circular world-disc which marked a circular expanse of country extending in equal distances from the observer to the horizon boundary, but also the 'circumfluent ocean,' of which the poet of his people sang so eloquently. Four centuries later saw the construction of the first sphere; and the allotment of land and water upon it, strange as it may seem, was received as correct right down to the middle ages. From north to south were drawn a pair of parallel lines, which were supposed to enclose a canal-like ocean. A similar pair extended through the equatorial regions, also enclosing water. The four remaining segments

were held to contain land, one section of which was regarded as explored. In the middle ages the science of map-making received a great check. The ban of the Church was upon the belief in the rotundity of the earth, and geographical knowledge had to a certain extent to conform to this pronouncement. The discovery of America and other unexplored areas, the invention of printing, the knowledge of engraving on wood and on copper, all, in their several ways, increased our geographical knowledge and the means of expressing it. Hence, by slow degrees, the evolution of the modern map.

The present century, and especially the last twenty years of it, has seen an enormous addition made to our geographical knowledge. Not only have civilised powers made elaborate surveys of their territories, but much land hitherto unexplored has been accurately laid down in maps. The amount of land-surface of the globe that has been fully surveyed is estimated at fifty-six to sixty per cent. of the whole land-area. Unexplored territories are calculated to cover ten or twelve per cent. of the land-surface. But although the proportion of land that has been surveyed is so large, the maps recording it are not always available. Some of them are the result of private exploration, and the geographical information thus acquired is only circulated among a comparatively few individuals. Others are not put upon the market at all, so that they are practically unobtainable. Neither is there any uniformity as regards scale, projection, or style of execution.

A Frenchman being shown over a London Board School, remarked: 'It is no wonder that you Englishmen have exalted notions of your importance. You teach by your maps that one-half of your tiny island is as big as a whole continent.' And there is certainly some truth in the accusation. Children may not grasp the qualifying fact of scale-difference. They see England and (say) South America similarly sized sheets, and institute comparisons which are certainly not to the prejudice of their patriotism.

The most interesting subject, perhaps, that was brought before the International Geographical Congress, held at Berne in August 1891, was the proposal that the Congress should promote the construction of a Map of the World on the scale of 1 : 1,000,000, or about sixteen miles to the inch. After duly considering the project, the Congress decided to initiate the preparation of such a map of the world.

To further this, a Commission of geographers and cartographers of different nationalities was created. It is the business of the Commission to endeavour to obtain the co-operation of the various governments and all societies and individuals interested, so that the scheme may be brought to a successful issue. Their progress will be reported to the next International Congress, to be held in London.

The number of sheets that the map will take up will be three or four thousand, and they will be of such a size that nine of them will cover an area about six feet square. Asia alone would cover an area resembling a square one side of which would measure over thirty feet. The complete map it is estimated will cover an area of about two thousand five hundred square feet. The cost of production is put down at about nine pounds per square foot for an edition of one thousand copies. If this edition is sold at two shillings a sheet, the deficit is estimated at £100,000. Striking as is the idea of such a map, or an atlas containing the different sections of such, the cost of production is enormous. Three or four hundred pounds for an atlas is rather an expensive item, and the most extravagant of those who have the spending of public moneys would no doubt hesitate before making such a purchase. The deficit of £100,000 is not, however, such a large sum, when the amounts that have been spent upon scientific expeditions are considered, so that the continental supporters of the scheme are very sanguine that the great map will become an accomplished fact. In such a map, Great Britain's dominions would of course take up a greater number of sheets than the territories of any other State. Russia comes next, and the United States third, as follows : British Empire, 222 ; Russia, 192 ; United States, 65 ; France, 55 ; Scandinavia, 54 ; China, 45 ; Brazil, 28 ; Egypt, &c., 27 ; Netherlands, 24 ; Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, 22 ; Germany, 21 ; Turkey, 18 ; Spain, 16 ; &c. It will be seen from this list that if the leading territorial powers of the world care to unite their forces and support the scheme, there will be but little difficulty in the matter.

The boundaries of States are to be shown in black, perhaps edged with a narrow strip of colour. The boundaries of minor political divisions, such as French departments and English counties, are to be omitted. All railroads, the more important roads, lines of telegraph, the navigable limits of rivers, are to be shown ; and it is also proposed to indicate the extent of forest-land. All water is to be shown blue. The depths of the ocean are to be indicated. Lakes, rivers, and swamps will be shown ; and tidal

information, along with markings to show the variation in lake levels, will also figure upon the map.

To determine the best method of indicating the relief of the world's surface is a rather difficult matter. But it is proposed to show, as far as is possible, both the relative and actual elevation of the land masses. All known heights will be inserted. Four contour lines are to be used, drawn to indicate elevations of 100, 300, 500, and 1200 metres ; or, roughly, 300, 1000, 1600, and 4000 feet. Three colours will be used to show relative heights ; and 'hachures,' or lines of shading, will also be requisitioned to mark the steepness of a district. Besides the boundaries of States being in black, the coast-line and lettering will also be similarly indicated.

Such are the more salient features of this proposed colossal map. It speaks much for the state of our present geographical knowledge, and the brotherhood which exists between scientists of different nations, that such a scheme is possible. Whether the possibility of its existence will become an accomplished fact, however, remains to be seen.

Some people assert that the scale of sixteen miles to the inch is too large a scale for a map of the world. They say that the time has not yet arrived for such a map. After all, however, the scale is not such a large one ; and it is only in very few cases that data will be inobtainable to fill in the requisite details. Such tracts as these are becoming both fewer and smaller each year. The past thirty years have added much to our knowledge of the interior of Australia, Alaska, the extreme north of North America, Greenland, and more especially of Central Africa. Two decades ago, a map of the Dark Continent on a larger scale than eighty miles to the inch would have been deemed an impossibility. Now we have a map of Africa showing thirty-two miles to the inch ; and the author of that map, so long ago as 1885, expressed the opinion that in ten years' time our knowledge of Africa would be such that a scale of sixteen miles to the inch would be the smallest that would suffice to show the main features of African geography.

This is not the only argument in support of the adoption of such a scale. The Indian Government have already produced a map of our Indian possessions and their surroundings on that scale. A similar map is also existent of the Transvaal, the East India Islands, and several Central and South American States. The Russians in their efforts after military aggrandisement have done much to further the cause of map-construction. Their maps are splendid specimens of accurate and condensed geographical information. The scale employed differs but little from that proposed in the scheme under discussion. The Germans have, like our own Royal Geographical Society, already published many maps of newly explored territories on a scale of sixteen miles to the inch or thereabouts. So that there is extant a vast fund of facts that could be pressed into service in the execution of this uniform map of the world. The greater part of Europe and a large portion of India and North America have been surveyed on a much smaller scale than this, and, in fact, it is only the one-eighth of unexplored

lands that the scale is too large for. But such a map as this would take years to execute, even with the co-operative action of the nations; and many areas would in the meantime become more fully known than they are at present.

One result that such a map would give us is, that the Balkan Peninsula will become more accurately known than it is at present. The cartographical science is certainly on a lower level in the territories that owned the domination of the Turk than it is in any other portion of Europe. This is not to be wondered at, when the heterogeneous character of the States that went to make up what used to be called Turkey in Europe is considered. China, too, would be known in more detail than it is at present. In carrying out the work in Central Africa, no assistance could be expected from the natives. The negroes know no maps. Their stay-at-home habits preclude their necessity, and their languages show no equivalent for our word map. But commercial enterprise and missionary effort have already done much to render native assistance unnecessary. The natives of the North Polar Regions, on the other hand, are keenly alive to the value of a map. They know what a map is. They know how to use it, and, what is more, they have over and over again demonstrated their ability to express their knowledge of things geographical in a rough sketch map. Arctic explorers have frequently found intelligent Eskimos who have drawn on the snow a rough representation of a coast-line with the direction of its trend accurately delineated. In fact, the members of one section of an expedition owed their rescue at the hands of their comrades to the cartographical knowledge of a native Greenland. It is quite possible to conceive that a more thorough information respecting the configuration of the Greenland and adjacent coasts would be obtainable if some means could only be devised of educating the native Eskimo to express in maps and sketches the knowledge of his ice-bound territory which he must possess.

The map, or atlas of the world, as some of its advocates prefer to designate it, would of course recognise the meridian of Greenwich as the numbering point for the meridians of longitude. The sheets to which we have alluded are each to show a length and breadth of five degrees. Now, the length of a degree of longitude at the equator is sixty-nine miles. In the latitude of sixty degrees, it is only the half of that; so, in order to keep the sheets of something like uniform size, the sections of the map north of the sixtieth parallel of latitude will show five degrees in length and ten degrees in breadth. These double-column sheets, as they are called, will fall of course to those territories lying within a thirty degrees' radius from the Poles. The British Empire will have fifty-seven of them. Russia takes no fewer than one hundred, Scandinavia fifty-one, and the United States twelve.

In the spelling of names, the Latin alphabet is to be used, and the actual spelling will follow that officially used throughout the territory shown. For some countries, such as Russia, it is proposed to have an alternate system of lettering—one for general circulation, and the other for the natives of Russia. Some such method

as this is of course necessary where the Latin alphabet is not used.

If we take the distance of the North Pole from the equator as six thousand miles, then this would be shown on the map by a line of some thirty-three feet in length. Maps on this scale showing a whole continent would be much more valuable for geographical instruction than are the detached maps which are so generally used. The difficulty would be of course one of space. Sheets, however, might be so combined as to make maps which would not fill a larger space than the *whole* of a school-room wall from ceiling to floor.

One thing is certain, that if the map or atlas comes into existence, the onward tendency of elementary education will ensure that its valuable aid will be utilised to advance geographical teaching. But as yet the matter is in abeyance. The International Commission is busy on the subject of the pros and cons of so great a scheme. What headway they have made with the subject, and what will be the fate of the suggestion which originated with Professor Penck, will be made known at the next Congress. But it speaks much for the advancement of geographical science that so bold and striking a scheme is quite within the scope of that which is possible.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XVIII.—UNCLE HARRY STRIKES HIS TENT.

THAT was the beginning of Isabel's trials. With great difficulty she assuaged her father's disordered emotions, and with Alexander's help—who had come in soon after the uncles had gone—she prevailed on him to go to bed; but for hours after he had retired she heard him pacing to and fro overhead. Next day when she returned from school her father was gone!—and she soon discovered that Doughty was gone too! She was debating with herself what she should do—whether she should not go directly to Alan Ainsworth and solicit his help to bring her father back—when Alan himself walked in. In the fullness of her heart Isabel told him all the story of her trouble, with what she guessed of the old relations between her father and his brother, and the painful scene of the evening before. Ainsworth was deeply interested: the hatred which the one brother bore the other, and had borne for many years, struck him as something ancient, peculiar, and literary.

'It has often been said,' he observed, 'that there is no hatred so bitter, constant, and deadly as the hatred of brethren.'

'Yes,' said Isabel. 'And in literature it may appear a great and romantic passion, but when you see it before your eyes and hear it with your ears—oh!—it strikes you with shame and horror! And yet when I think of poor Uncle Harry's life, and all he has endured, I can feel only pity for him!—Does it not seem dreadful,' she added,

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mainly to herself, 'that women with the best intentions should only cause division between men like these!'

'It always has been so,' said Ainsworth philosophically—for he did not feel a victim himself—'and, I suppose, it always will be. Since a woman can be the wife of only one man, the more desirable she is, the more inevitable it is that there should be rival claimants for her, and the more likely there should be divisions, and perhaps hatreds.'

'I suppose it must be so,' said Isabel, considering him an instant; 'but it is none the less pitiful and dreadful.'

The pity and the dread of it she felt so much that, when she had given Alan instructions where to seek her father, and had seen him set off to carry them out, she herself set out for Rutland Gate. She was sorry for her uncle from the bottom of her heart, now that she had had revealed to her the grievance which he had nursed during his long, long years of loneliness and exile. She completely comprehended how it had all come about: her mother in two minds between the two brothers; admiring, respecting, and liking the one who first asked for her love, but yet irresistibly drawn and captivated by the charm of the other, who, as it were, suddenly caught her up and carried her off. Not one of the three could she find it in her to blame: not her mother—whose case she was beginning to suspect might become her own any day—not her father, who, loving a woman and perceiving she loved him, resolved to take all risks and marry her; and certainly not her uncle, who had been faithful to her mother's memory and who had made his disappointment life-long. Her uncle had been so constituted that he had suffered most, and therefore she would carry to him all her pity; but at the same time she would say to him: 'See; there was no one truly to blame. And it is all past; let it be forgiven, and let yourself and my father be friends, as she would have desired whose memory you cherish.'

When the door of the house at Rutland Gate was opened to her, she asked to see Mr Raynor. The responsible gentleman in black who opened the door told her in confidence—all domestics and others of inferior station were inclined to be communicative to Isabel—that her uncle was in his room packing up.

'Packing up! I suppose I may venture to disturb him?'

The domestic answered that if she would wait a moment he would himself inquire. He returned with speed and asked her to 'walk up.' Her uncle received her at the door of his room with a polite constraint.

'You are not going away—are you, uncle?' she asked with deep concern.

'I am, my dear,' he answered, pressing her hand.

'Abroad again?'

'No; not abroad. I think I have explored

foreign countries enough: I am now going to explore my own country. I am going on a riding or driving tour for two or three months.'

'Months!' she exclaimed.

'That's why I must take some luggage. I shall send it on by train from point to point.'

He was turning away to resume his packing, but she retained his hand and kept him before her. 'Going away,' she said, 'because of this little trouble of last night, and without a word of forgiveness and friendliness! Oh, uncle, is that worthy of you?'

'My dear child,' said he, 'for the trouble of last night I ask your pardon. I forgot myself shamefully.'

'You know, uncle,' said she, 'it is not that I mean. The pain I felt is a small matter; the great thing is the pain you gave my father. Have you no word of forgiveness for him?'

'I forgive him, my dear; I forgive him,' said he, and forcibly withdrew his hand. 'But I wish to forget him. I wish to see him no more, and to hear of him no more. He does not need me: he has you.'

'The scene of last night has completely unsettled him again,' said Isabel, 'and driven him away. When I returned from school he was gone.'

'Gone—is he? That should prove a good thing for you.'

'But I will find him again and bring him back. Do you imagine, uncle, I am so easily turned aside from a purpose as that? He is worth saving from his besetting weakness, and I shall devote myself to saving him.'

'Very well,' said he, when he had considered her a moment. 'You do not ask my advice, and I do not give it.'

'But, dear uncle,' said she, 'you are not in a condition of mind to give advice: you are biased. I think of you both with much the same feeling: why will you not let me love you both? Is that a great thing to ask? Why will you not think with me about my father, and be friendly and helpful with him?'

'Because I cannot. You are a good girl, and you mean well; but really, my dear, I must ask you—beg of you—to drop the subject. Your father has, let us say, a habit of conduct of many years' standing, of which he will not for a long time, if ever, be broken; I have a habit of feeling, let us say, of which I will not for a long time, if ever, be broken. Let us say no more about it.'

She considered. Her uncle's words seemed reasonable: it might be well to leave the softening of his heart to the influence of Time; at least to wait for the effect of two or three months' absence and loneliness on him, and of two or three months' love and supervision on her father. Cast down, but not in despair, she said 'Good-bye' to her uncle and wished him health and peace on his journey; and so she left him.

As she descended the stairs, she wondered whether it would not be proper to see her aunt, perhaps, before she left the house. A decision was anticipated by the opening of a door and the appearance of her aunt's maid; for Mrs Suffield now had a maid all to herself, 'and everything grand and becoming about her.'

'Please, Miss Raynor,' said the maid, 'Mrs

Suffield says, will you step in and speak to her a moment?' "

Mrs Suffield sat before a cheval glass: she was dressing. As her niece entered she rose to turn herself and to view by the aid of a hand-glass the manner of her hair in the tall mirror, and Isabel was compelled to think that her aunt was a very handsome woman in spite of her fifty years or so.

'I think I can manage by myself now, Wilkins,' said she to her maid. 'Miss Raynor will help me with my dress.'

'Very well, ma'am,' said Wilkins. 'But I hope you will get your *bust* nicely arranged, for not many ladies as I've dressed has such a fine *bust* as you, ma'am.' (The devoted, but incorrect, creature obviously meant 'bust'.)

'I'll see to it, Wilkins,' said Mrs Suffield; 'don't be anxious.' And Wilkins withdrew.—'So you've been to see your uncle in private, Bell, before he goes.'

'Yes, aunt,' said Isabel; 'I came to see him specially, though I did not know he was going.'

'Going! Yes; of course, he's going! What else did you expect, after the way you've been going?'

'I, aunt? I suppose you allude to what I've done about my father?'

'I suppose I do, my dear. You don't know your uncle, and you think you know your father. You've thrown your uncle over, and taken up with your father; a very natural thing to do, I daresay: he always had a way with women. But you've spoiled yourself; your uncle meant to set up house and to make you mistress of it, and, I believe, to make you his heir. You were always absurdly quixotic, Bell; but I suppose you never really thought of the chances you were throwing away.'

'Oh yes, aunt,' said Isabel; 'I knew all these things.'

Her aunt turned on her a penetrating, business-like gaze. 'You knew them!' she said.

'I knew them, or guessed them,' said Isabel carelessly.

'And you chose the better part: your father? Well, upon my word! The girl's a constant wonder to me? And where, or how, may I ask, did you find your father?'

'I had rather keep that to myself, if you please, aunt.'

'Oh, very well,' said her aunt. 'Of course, it's no business of mine. You'll go your own way, Bell, as usual.—Lace this thing for me—will you, my dear? It laces at the back.'

Had it been her aunt's face Isabel was close to the next few seconds, and not her back-hair, the conversation might have had a gentler and more generous end. But they were both so much akin in temper, that each rather repelled than attracted the other, for the most part, and neither would sue to the other for a better understanding.

'It seems to me, aunt,' said Isabel, 'exceedingly harsh and unkind of you to speak like this of what concerns your brother.'

'Which brother, my dear?' said her aunt. 'I have two brothers: of whom I prefer the one, and you prefer the other.'

'He needs my preference!' exclaimed Isabel. 'He has no one but me!'

'That's entirely his own fault,' said her aunt. 'But he *has* you, and having you he has a great deal: I will say that for you.'

'But why are you so terribly wanting in consideration and love for him?'

'Am I so wanting?' said her aunt; and an ancient fount of feeling seemed to rise within her. 'It must be then, I suppose, because he was so wanting in consideration and love for me. He never had any love or regard for any one but himself. He would always take, but never give. He was all self; he was self-conceited, self-satisfied, self-willed, self-sufficient, self-indulgent, self-opinioned, and self-ish.'

'And now,' retorted her niece, 'it is self-evident that he is self-reproved, self-abased, self-tormented, self-neglectful, and self-destructive: he is scarcely conscious of himself at all now.'

Her aunt waited a moment before she replied: 'I wish him no harm—only good; but I wish he would not always depend for his good on some one else than himself. I am afraid you are going to spoil your life for him; and he'll let you do it.'

'But if it gives me pleasure to spend my life for him, aunt?' said Isabel.

'Then I've nothing more to say. You are of age, my dear, and responsible for your actions. We shall be pleased to see you just as usual, though I suppose your father won't care to come often. And I daresay his dreadful habit keeps him sometimes from being quite presentable. There are some people, for instance, coming to dinner to-night—Lord Clitheroe and other political friends of your uncle: I would have liked to ask you and your father; but, really, I hesitated.'

'I don't think father would have cared to come,' said Isabel, scarce knowing whether it was anger or tears she felt she must restrain. 'He is not in the least interested in politics, and he laughs at the folly of people who give themselves up to politics. He is chiefly interested in Literature and Art; and he talks well and writes well about both.'

'Oh, indeed!' said her aunt in a tone distinctly final. 'Well, my dear, come when you will. It's about time I went down.—Good-bye.'

Isabel departed not only in disappointment, but in vexation and wrath. She had desired as their talk had progressed to say many bitter and biting things to her aunt; but she had restrained herself, partly out of injured respect for her aunt, and partly out of the hope that it might thus be better for her father; now she thought she had restrained herself in vain. Her aunt seemed all the more contemptuous of her father, because of the measured way she had spoken of him! How cruelly both her uncle and her aunt had spoken of her father!—and how little they seemed to care whether he fared well or ill! What a strange thing was family love!—liker family hate! Could it be that that kind of indifference affected some families more than others?

Thus her thoughts tossed to and fro like the water of a wind-swept pool; and the end of her cogitations was that she felt more closely identified with her father than ever, and more resolutely determined to strengthen and build him up so that no one would venture to speak of him

save with respect. And thus she found her way back to her lodgings, and sat till the darkness closed round her, waiting for the return of her father—who did not come.

(To be continued.)

HOLLY TEA.

FOUR species of Holly are used in the New World as a beverage—'Ilex paraguayensis' in South America; 'Ilex vomitoria' in North Carolina; and 'Ilex gongonha' and 'Ilex theezans' in Brazil.

'Ilex paraguayensis,' Yerba Maté, or as it is sometimes called, Paraguay Tea, is yielded by a tree twelve to twenty-five feet in height, very leafy, and which at a distance bears some resemblance to an orange tree. It grows wild in large natural plantations in Paraguay, and also in various localities between the rivers Uruguay and Paraná. It is supposed also at one time to have been indigenous to Brazil. Yerba Maté has been in use among the South American Indians from time immemorial. They introduced it to the Jesuits when they established themselves among them; and these latter, appreciating the value of the plant, taught the natives how to cut the plants methodically and without unnecessary waste. Since their expulsion from the country, the plants have in many instances been wantonly destroyed by the Yerbateros or gatherers of Maté. An idea of the enormous extent of these Maté forests may be imagined when we say that in spite of the extravagant waste in cutting, something like forty to fifty million pounds are consumed annually throughout South America.

The collection is conducted somewhat in the following way: The Maté wood having been discovered, the Indians, who are employed by merchants for the purpose, build wigwams, and settle down for about six months to the work. An open space is then prepared, and the surface of the soil beaten hard and smooth with mallets. An arch of hurdles is then erected over it, and the branches of the tree are placed on the arch, and a fire kindled underneath, by which means the branches and leaves are thoroughly dried, without being allowed to become scorched. During this process the aroma is developed. When sufficiently roasted, the branches are placed on the hard soil and beaten with sticks, the dried leaves being by this means knocked off and reduced to a powder. Maté treated in this way is known as Caa-guaza, and it is this mixture of leaf, petioles, and small branches, which finds its way to this and other countries. In Paraguay, two other varieties are met with, the Caa-miri, the leaf torn from its midrib and veins, without roasting; and the Caa-cuys, the half-expanded leaf-buds. This latter, however, does not keep well, and is never exported.

In the Argentine and the adjacent countries, Maté-drinking is quite an institution. We were speaking a few weeks ago with a gentleman who has recently returned from South America, and he said that Maté is far more used there than tea is at home. It is quite the correct thing, if you pay a visit, for Maté to be passed round; and a kettle of water is usually kept at boiling-point, so that the infusion may be made promptly.

The custom permeates all ranks; even magisterial dignity is affected by it. At the police court one of the attendants takes care that there is a good supply of boiling water always on hand for Maté-making, not for the benefit of the prisoners—that goes without saying—but for the refectory of any friends of the magistrate that may chance to call upon him during the day.

Maté is sometimes drunk in the same way as we take tea; but the more usual method is to suck it through a tube, after the fashion of American drinks. Hot water is poured on the powdered leaf; then a lump of burned sugar and sometimes a few drops of lemon-juice, are added. Gourds are often employed as cups, and these may be tastefully mounted; and the tube or bombilla, which is furnished at the lower end with a perforated bulb or strainer to prevent the leaves entering the mouth, is often made of electro silver.

The taste for the infusion is very soon acquired, and once the habit of taking it is formed, it is very difficult to break it. It is extremely refreshing and restorative, especially after great fatigue has been endured, and many travellers have testified to its value under these conditions.

From time to time medical men have endeavoured to introduce Maté into this country, but without much success. Whilst containing the same active principle as tea and coffee, it has a slight but pleasant bitter taste, and so acts as a tonic stimulant. It is also said to exert a beneficial action upon the internal organism, which tea and coffee are incapable of doing.

The North Carolina species ('Ilex vomitoria' or 'Ilex Cassine') is an elegant shrub, ten to fifteen feet high, and sometimes rises into a small tree of twenty to twenty-five feet. It grows in the Southern States of North America along the sea-coast, and has been used for many ages by the Creek Indians. The use of it, however, has now been totally abandoned by the white inhabitants; and the Indians have to a great extent followed their example.

It was a most important plant at one time, as is evidenced by the fact that every traveller of repute that has visited the country has made mention of it. In addition to being used as an ordinary beverage with milk and sugar, it was at times partaken of by men only, with great ceremonial and awful invocations.

The infusion is called Cassine, and when prepared for religious or state occasions is known also as 'black drink.' Mr A. S. Gatschet, of the Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, who a few years back edited the *Migration Legend of the Creek Indians*, tells us in his notes to this work that the ancient Creeks had three modes of preparing it; the three potions resulting from them differing widely in strength according to the uses for which they were intended. Small quantities of the young leaf parched in a pot until it assumed a brown colour produced a liquor acting as an exhilarant, which was drunk by the people at the 'busk,' or Indian feast of first-fruits, and by the 'elders' when assembled in council, or when discussing every-day topics. After the potion has been poured from one pan or cooler into another, it begins to ferment, and to produce a white froth, from which it is styled also 'white drink'—the term 'white' alluding also to its purifying quali-

ties. To make the liquid stronger, a larger infusion of the parched leaves is required; it then assumes a dark hue, nearly as black as molasses, and acts as a powerful intoxicating stimulant. A still larger addition of the Cassine leaf produces a strong narcotic, which was used by conjurers to evoke prophetic ecstasies accompanied by dreams. The 'black drink' of the weaker sort acts as an emetic when drunk in great quantity, and was used as such at the annual bask, and on other occasions extensively. The Creeks esteemed this drink so highly that no one was allowed to drink it in council unless he had proved himself a brave warrior. After drinking the liquor, they could go for twenty-four hours without eating or drinking; and in military expeditions the only supplies they used to carry were gourd bottles or wooden vessels full of this drink.

Why it has fallen into disuse as a beverage it is difficult to surmise. Possibly its odour and taste, which are not so pleasant as in the fragrant tea of China, Ceylon, and India, has something to do with it. It is said to be cheaper than these teas; but we are afraid that this advantage will scarcely compensate for its deficiencies in other respects. Although there are said to be about forty thousand square miles from Virginia to Texas upon which the plant grows, we fear it will never recover its ascendancy in popular estimation.

The other two species of holly mentioned in the opening paragraph ('*Ilex gongonha*' and '*Ilex theezans*') have only a local reputation, and call for no special remarks.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

MR LANGLAND and his daughter stood and looked at each other in perplexity and chagrin, smiled wryly to each other, but said nothing. In a few moments they heard voices without. The door opened—and Mr Purvey entered, followed by—whom?—by Mr Godfrey! What did it mean? It could not be that!—No, never! They both came forward.

'Miss Langland,' said Mr Purvey, his long face creased with smiles, 'permit me to introduce to you my son Godfrey.'

'Mr Godfrey?' exclaimed Miss Langland and her father together.

'Father!' cried Mr Godfrey, 'what is this?'

'It is,' said Mr Purvey with a benevolent smile, and a widespread expository palm, 'the unavoidable result, my son, of the way we have been going on.'

'And your name is?'—said Miss Langland, with large, puzzled eyes on Mr Godfrey.

'Godfrey Purvey,' answered that young man with self-respect, with dignity, but without the faintest show of swagger; 'and this,' he continued, placing his hand on his father's shoulder, 'is my father, Miss Langland.'

'But how!—Why!' exclaimed Kitty, and could say no more.

Her eyes wistfully searched him up and down, as if to discover if there were any change in him besides his change of name.

'You may wonder, Mr Langland,' said Godfrey,

turning to the silent and astonished Squire, 'why there has been this mystery about my identity.'

'I do!' said the Squire emphatically.

'It began originally with Miss Langland,' said Godfrey. 'When we first met in London, she failed, I suppose, to catch my name properly; and then when we sat at dinner she began to talk of certain things without knowing who I was. She called me Mr Godfrey, and under the circumstances I let the name be. I hope I am forgiven?'

Miss Langland coloured and dropped her eyes; for well did she remember that conversation and the kind of thing she had said about Mr Purvey. The Squire also was put out by his recollection of the discourse he had held both with Colonel Swetenham and with Mr Godfrey—while Mr Purvey looked innocently on, like a smiling but elderly fairy.

'Ah, yes,' said the Squire hurriedly; 'to be sure—to be sure. And, of course, it was amusing and interesting to keep the mistake up.'

'Father,' said Kitty, apparently recovering her self-possession, 'we had better be going.—Good-bye, Mr—Godfrey.' (Her eyes were veiled when she said it.) 'Good-bye, Mr Purvey.'

'Good-bye, Miss Langland,' said Mr Godfrey Purvey.

They touched each other's hand, but said no word—and that not on account of any lofty sense of dignity disturbed or pride shaken, but only because each thought the other deeply offended. Thus they parted; and thus each—as has been the way of mankind since they practised holding their tongues on occasion—made the other miserable by a foolish misunderstanding.

'Why—why have you done this, father?' exclaimed Godfrey, when the Squire and his daughter were gone.

'Well, Godfrey,' said Mr Purvey, looking wistful and uncertain (for him), 'it had to come—now, had it not?'

'It had to come, of course, father,' said the son, pacing up and down in agitation. 'But not so soon. You spoke too soon—much too soon!—And now all is lost!'

'I can't think what you mean!' exclaimed Mr Purvey testily. 'I don't know what it all means! You suddenly write to me that you are in London, and coming down to me. The next day you write that you have met the Langlands, and that they didn't discover you were your father's son, and you ask that for the present here, in my own house, you should not be my son, but only Mr Godfrey, a stranger! Why? You refused to tell me!'

'Not refused, father!'

'Well, Godfrey, you put me off with reasons that were no reasons. It was an absurd situation, and it very properly has come to an end!—the kind of forced and unnatural thing that is made to occur in lying works of fiction.'

'Why, father,' demanded Godfrey with a smile, 'what do you know of works of fiction?'

'I know a little,' said Mr Purvey, with something like a blush, to hide which he looked down and flicked off a speck of white from the skirt of his black coat. 'I used not to read them. But I am growing old, and I don't have the grasp I used to have of the sermons of Mr Lightowler in *The Christian Banner*; so I have taken lately

to look at bits of the tales that are printed there.—But you have led me aside into a digression, Godfrey.—You can now tell me plainly, I suppose, why you thought this mystery necessary?

'It was for the sake of your reputation and my own, father.'

'My reputation, Godfrey?—My reputation has never been assailed, and I am not aware that it has ever been in any danger!' exclaimed Mr Purvey, gazing on his son in amazement. 'I have never defrauded any man!—I have never despoiled the widow or the orphan!—and I believe my balance at the bank is perfectly satisfactory!'

'My dear father,' said the young man, taking the elder's elbow in a firm but affectionate grip, 'we have all several reputations—or rather, our reputation may be regarded from several points of view, with one or two of which you, father, may be but slightly acquainted.'

'Still a reason that is no reason, my son—or, at least, that I cannot understand.'

'Well, father, if you must have it,' said Godfrey desperately, 'the plain reason was that I am your son and that you are my father. If I had been known to be your son, my chances with Miss Langland would have been ruined—as they are now!'

'Do you mean to say,' demanded the old man in honest surprise, 'that they do not like me?—do not approve of me?'

'Can you ask me, father? Have I not said there are points of view you have no idea of?'

'Dear me!' exclaimed the old man, and sat down to consider.

As for Kitty Langland, she was grievously afflicted. The *éclaircissement*, or 'clearing up,' had come in the middle of the afternoon. It had been Mr Godfrey's wont, when he did not dine with the Langlands—and he frequently did—to call in and talk with the ladies before or after dinner. Kitty looked for his coming that day with a feverish eagerness; but he did not come, and she was chilled and depressed with a sense of loneliness and bereavement. What if he never came again? Could she endure it?

But after that one act of prostration in thought before the image of Mr Godfrey, her native pride reasserted itself. Why should he be so deeply offended? Had he not done wrong in keeping so long from her the fact that he was Mr Purvey's son, and so leading her on, or at least permitting her, to say things uncomplimentary and acrimonious of his father? She was in that mood after dinner, when the Squire, who had been silently and laboriously revolving the whole matter in his mind and rubbing off its rough edges, began to talk about it.

'Mr Purvey,' said he, 'is not such a bad creature, after all.'

'No,' said she; 'he behaved quite decently this afternoon; though at first I couldn't understand those curious little sniggers of his.'

'At times,' continued the Squire, 'he is quite endurable; and he has a wonderful understanding of business.'

'I suppose he has,' said Kitty; 'and I suppose he does not mind—if he knows—the things we have said about him.'

'I wonder,' said the Squire; 'though our

position is a little humiliating. I think we ought to come to an understanding.'

'Perhaps,' said Kitty.

'If it hadn't been for him,' resumed the Squire, after a pause, 'we should never have had this discovery of coal. And he can only be pleased at the way we have received his son, without knowing he was his son.'

'I suppose so,' assented Kitty.

'Purvey's Patent Food,' murmured the Squire. 'Purvey is not a nice name to be connected with.'

'No,' said Kitty; 'it is not a very nice name.'

'Though I can't think why,' said the Squire, 'Godfrey has kept up the mystery of his name so long.'

'Nor I,' said Kitty, though she had a strong suspicion that the reason was not unconnected with herself; but not for the world would she have said so.

'But, Kitty,' said the Squire, sitting up, and grasping the arms of his chair in his favourite fashion when he wished to make an important delivery, 'I thought you and Godfrey were very much taken up with each other.'

'Did you, father?' said Kitty, bending closely over the piece of crewel-work her fingers were occupied with.

'But am I right?' insisted the Squire.

There was a considerable pause, during which Kitty seemed engrossed with her work, and pressed out the pattern on her knee to see how it was going. 'I don't know, father,' said she, looking up carelessly.

'Pon my word!' exclaimed the Squire irritably, 'the best and frankest of women is just in these matters like a cat—demure and secret, and slinking in and out of hedges! Why can't a woman give a straightforward, truthful answer, so far as she knows, about a man?'

Then Kitty suddenly put up her hands to her face and sobbed a little—very quietly; for she was a healthy girl, without a touch of the hysterical, and with a considerable power of self-restraint. There was a longish pause, during which the Squire waited, somewhat uncomfortably, for the explanation which, he thought, was now bound to come.

'I think I would like to go to bed, father,' said Kitty, rising. 'Good-night, father.' She kissed him and went; and he said not a word.

Kitty passed a bad night. In the darkness and silence, with the strange and lonely sounds of an old house in her painfully wakeful ear—subdued, mysterious creaks on the stairs, and ghostly taps and scratchings at her window-panes—her pride and reserve fell from her, and she was merely a simple, loving woman, without prepossessions and without prejudices. What mattered Godfrey's name to her?—what mattered his origin?—what mattered anything?—since she loved him, and he loved her! She believed he loved her, and therefore she believed that he must be ready to forgive her everything, even as she was ready to forgive him! Why, then, should they not meet in mutual understanding and love? She, at least, would not proudly keep off a meeting. And so, towards morning, she slept—slept a somewhat disturbed sleep—but still slept.

Soon after breakfast she and her father went as usual to see the progress of the boring. God-

frey was waiting outside, looking a little melancholy; but he brightened upon seeing his visitors. After exchange of greetings, in which nothing was said of the incident of the afternoon before, the Squire strode briskly in, probably from forethought; and the two followed slowly.

'I hope,' said Godfrey hurriedly, 'you are no longer offended with me, Miss Langland?'

'Offended? No!' said Kitty, blushing and turning her head away. 'I thought *you* were offended with *me*!'

'That is very odd!' said he, with a joyous little laugh. 'That just shows how misunderstanding works! We are good friends again, then?' he added.

'Oh yes,' said she, and gave him a bright look, which thrilled him to the marrow.

That was all that passed then: they were thereafter occupied with the continued evidences of coal. The Squire asked Godfrey to come to dinner, and also to convey a similar invitation to Mr Purvey. It was after dinner that the full explanation came between the two young people: Kitty was in the gayest spirits, and her sister discreetly sat down by herself at the piano and played soft music.

'Why,' she demanded, 'did you keep yourself "wrop up in a mistry," as Thackeray's Jeames says?'

'Don't you understand?' said he. 'When I heard you did not like, or even approve of my father, I did not wish to be condemned—to be put in the same category as you put him—without any evidence.'

'But,' she asked, 'when you saw, when you understood that I—that we did not condemn you, did not put you in that category—why did you still keep up the mystery?'

'I don't think I saw that. But, besides, I wanted you to see, to come to understand, that your opinion of my father was wrong. I knew at first it was wrong, but it was of no use to say so: people never are turned from their prejudices except by evidence they find, or seem to find, for themselves.—My father,' he continued with earnest warmth, 'has disagreeable points about him, I know; he does things and says things that grate, I am quite aware; but they are only the results of bad training, hardship in youth, and strict business habits: they are no more truly parts of himself than the ugly thorns and burs that may stick to a man who has pushed and torn his way through a tangled thicket. He is really a good man, simple, honourable, and unselfish, as I have good reason to know.'

'I daresay you are right,' said Kitty humbly, 'and I am very sorry that I have been such a prejudiced, silly girl. I hope—I *do* hope—your father knows nothing of the unkind things I said.'

'Do you think I would tell him?' he asked.

'I thought,' she said, 'you might have told him at first. But,' she asked, with the faintest touch of coquetry, 'why were you so anxious about your father's reputation with—with me?'

Then he looked on her, and she blushed and hung her head; and then he blushed till the blood tingled to his finger-tips.

'Don't you understand?' he said again. 'There was a—a chance, which I longed to realise, that he and—I might become related to you—in

different ways, of course. You were very angry, I know,' he continued, after a pause, 'when my father hoped you would marry his son: are you angry now?'

'No,' she answered, feeling the outline of her chair with the hand next him.

'And,' he continued, 'if—if my father came to you now, and—asked you to—to marry his son, what would you say?'

'I would say "Yes,"' she answered in a low, almost inaudible voice.

The next moment her hand was clasped in his, and the next they were startled by the crash of a triumphal march from the piano. When the triumphal music ceased, and while that first fully responsive communication of hands was thrilling through them both, Godfrey stooped and murmured something which may not be repeated; but the repetition is the less necessary, because its import is sufficiently clear from what Kitty said in response or in retort.

'I do not like your name,' said she, giving him a gay, mischievous glance.

'That's a pity,' said he. 'We might contrive to change it. Purvey, I admit, has not an adorable sound. But I believe it is only the vulgarised form of a very fine name.'

'What is that?' she asked.

'Just as Pugh,' said he, 'is short—and vulgar—for Ap Hugh (I believe), and Parry for Ap Harry, so Purvey—'

'Is short,' she interrupted with a light laugh, 'for Ap Hervey, I suppose?'

'Just so,' said he. 'How would you like Ap Hervey? Mrs Ap Hervey might sound well—Mrs Godfrey Ap Hervey.'

'Don't!' she exclaimed.

'I know my father is Welsh,' said he; 'and all Welshmen and Irishmen, I believe, are the descendants of kings—kings who must have had very few subjects. And even a very great novelist, George Meredith, thinks no men are such fine fellows or have such lofty descent as Welshmen.'

'Don't!' she said again, somewhat piteously. 'You are making game of me. I think the name must remain—as it is.'

It may be accepted without saying that it was soon known to all in the drawing-room that there was the prospect of an alliance between the houses of Langland and Purvey; indeed, the fact was sufficiently attested by the genial demeanour of Purvey—of Purvey's Patent Food. He smiled upon every one and rubbed his hands; and he expressly asked Kitty's sister the date of her birthday, and when he was told it, he emphatically declared he would not forget it.

Now my story ought to end at this point; but it doesn't. There is that important question of coal, or no coal, to be settled. The answer finally resolved itself in a day or two into 'No coal!'—that is to say, not coal enough to be worked with profit. It was coal, and still coal for a certain depth, the amount of which I forget; but then it was something else, and it continued something else for a considerable depth more—and every one was disappointed. But a strange and joyous thing happened. They were all in the enclosure one day when Godfrey uttered a great shout: he was giving attention to the boring. They all ran to him.

'Look at that!' he cried.

They looked: steaming water was spouting up in the bore.

'Pah!' said he. 'Smell it!'

The smell was as that of bad eggs: he had tapped a spring—a thermal spring like that of Aix-la-Chapelle—impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen! And that was the beginning of the salubrious watering-place called New Bath, which, with its gay villas and hotels, planned by the younger Purvey, and built by the elder, promises to be almost, if not quite, as profitable as a coal mine would have been, and which is far pleasanter to look at.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A REMARKABLE bed of fuller's-earth was some years ago discovered in Keltie Glen, among the Ochil Hills, in the parish of Dunning, Perthshire, on the estate of Lord Rollo. A clear mountain stream runs down the glen, at the bottom of which the seam of fuller's-earth appears close to the surface, and on one side of the stream runs backwards for a considerable way. Very fine preparations of it are being now produced at the works recently erected at Keltie, which preparations are admirably adapted for a variety of uses. Though the true nature and name of the substance was only recently detected, its cleansing properties had been already known, as it was found that several of the old dwellers in the neighbourhood had been in the habit of using it when they cleaned their blankets and woollen stuffs. A well-known London physician was shortly afterwards the guest of Lord Rollo, and he was so much interested in the discovery, that he recommended specimens to be sent to the eminent metallurgist, the late Dr Percy, who had a Report furnished thereon. Beds of fuller's-earth are in Great Britain few and far between, and this one in Strathearn is pronounced, on the highest authority, to be quite unique in its exceptional purity. Hence the interest of the discovery, from which we may look forward to very great benefits arising when we consider the important purposes for which fuller's-earth is used. Amongst its various properties, the oldest and best-known one is its cleansing property. For this purpose, whether with reference to woollen stuffs, felt, or wooden boards, it will be found invaluable. In fact, it has been pronounced to be a 'splendid natural soap.' Fuller's-earth is also largely used by oil refiners, and in the refining of petroleum and wax; while it has long been sold by chemists in powder for medical purposes.

We last month referred to the interesting experiments of Professor Dewar in the liquefaction of gases, including the reduction to the liquid state of that compound gas which is represented by the air which we breathe. Since that notice appeared, Professor Dewar has gone a step farther, and has succeeded in freezing liquid air into a clear, transparent solid. It is not yet quite known whether this jelly-like substance consists of solid nitrogen containing liquid oxygen in its pores, but it may be so, for although Professor Dewar has succeeded in solidifying nitrogen by

itself, oxygen resists all his efforts. This wonderful result has been attained by using the most powerful apparatus, and the great expense attending the work has, as in the case of the former experiments, been met by the generosity of the Goldsmiths' Company.

The P. and O. steamer *Ballarat* recently brought to London the largest consignment of Australian butter which has ever reached this country. Its total weight was six hundred and seventy tons, and its value upwards of sixty-seven thousand pounds. The butter was collected from different factories in Victoria and New South Wales, the smaller of which supplied half a ton or so each, while the largest contributed one hundred tons. It is now believed that a trade in Australian cheese can in like manner be initiated. A question has been naturally raised as to the reason why British dairy farmers have allowed a distant country like Australia to compete with them in this wholesale way. Last year the farmers of Victoria secured a net profit of no less than a quarter of a million sterling by their butter exports to this country, and this year it is expected that that sum will be doubled. Another question arises too: if the butter can be preserved so that it can pass the ordeal of a long voyage through the tropics, could not English farmers learn how to keep their summer butter for the winter market?

For some time past certain tramways in the United States have used a locomotive known as the Connelly Motor, which is driven by the explosive vapour from mineral oil. This same motor is now on its trial at Greenwich (London), and it is reported to be both efficient and economical in its working. The engine, which is fixed on a separate car from that carrying the passengers, has two cylinders and develops twelve horse-power. The oil is stored in a receptacle placed above the engine, and there is an ingenious system of water circulation to keep the cylinders cool and the oil warm. This water, after cooling the cylinders, attains a heat of one hundred and ten degrees Fahrenheit, and is then used for warming the oil, after which it flows through a number of tubes which are exposed to the atmosphere beneath the car, and is again pumped up to resume its alternate duties of cooling the cylinders and warming the oil. The explosive vapour is fired by an electric current generated by a small dynamo-machine, and stored in an accumulator. This source of electricity also serves to illuminate the car at night.

The provisioning of a ship destined for Arctic exploration has always been a matter of some difficulty; but the work is now rendered far easier owing to the perfection to which the art of reducing nourishing food to the smallest bulk has been carried. In London lately, a large party was invited to inspect the preserved meats, &c., which have been specially prepared by the Bovril Company for Dr Nansen's coming expedition to the Arctic Seas. The collection included meat essences, compressed tea, chocolate allied with bovril, dried fruits, vegetables, eggs, and even eels. A palatable and highly nourishing drink is composed of port wine and beef extract; while there were various 'composition' foods into which

enter barley, ham-fat, vegetables, oatmeal, anchovies, and beef, all being perfectly free from water. In the case of the explorers being obliged to abandon their ship, they will carry away with them certain small cakes of compressed food, the constituents of which have been carefully worked out so as to present the greatest amount of nutriment in the smallest bulk. An ounce or two a day of this concentrated food will enable a man to do the hardest work and withstand the greatest cold.

Certain experiments by Captain Ziegler of Mannheim with so-called 'bullet-proof' cloth seem to carry the mind back to the time when chain armour was used for the protection of fighting-men. For the new material consists of a wire-netting covered with a special composition, and it is claimed for it that it will stop a bullet, which is broken up and half fused upon impact. This so-called new invention is believed to be a revival of 'Scarneo's Portable Armour,' which was patented in all countries several years ago, and which, upon trial by the military authorities at Felixdorf, was found to be useless. Such a method of defence would certainly be of service in the case of a revolver bullet, and would possibly stop one of larger size from the 'old brown Bess' of Wellington's time; but the modern rifle projectile is a very different thing, and it is doubtful if any kind of armour which a man could lift would be proof against its terrible attack.

A considerable addition to the National Gallery buildings, London, will be possible when the St George's Barracks have been moved to the Millbank Prison site near the river. In his last Report, the Director of the National Gallery points out the urgent necessity for enlarging the premises so as to afford adequate accommodation for recently acquired pictures, and the adjoining barracks and drill-yard will give ample space for the proposed additional buildings. The alterations are estimated to occupy about three years.

A new method of conveying mail-bags between New York and Brooklyn is under consideration. Hitherto pneumatic tubes have been employed in this service, the tubes being laid under the streets, as they are in certain districts of London. But there would be considerable difficulty in carrying such tubes across the East River. The new plan proposed is to lay a pipe over the East River Bridge, and this pipe will contain a miniature electric railway with cylindrical cars for the accommodation of the mail-bags. A speed of one hundred miles an hour would not be difficult of attainment under such conditions.

Experiments have recently been carried out by the German military authorities, having for their object the illumination of large spaces by means of electric arc-lights, supported in the air by captive balloons. The source of electrical energy is said to be placed on the ground, but it is not stated whether this takes the form of a dynamo-machine and steam-engine, or whether it is an accumulator. The lamp used gives a power of five thousand candles, which is said to efficiently illuminate a large area from a height of nearly two thousand feet. This last statement we feel very much inclined to doubt. The necessarily cumbersome nature of an electrical installation, to say nothing of the impossibility of using a balloon in stormy weather, would greatly detract from

the merits of this system. A better means of illuminating a wide area for military purposes was successfully tried in our own country many years ago. The apparatus consisted of a hollow shell carrying a canvas parachute and a brilliantly burning composition. On being fired from a mortar, the shell burst, leaving the light-bearing parachute floating in the air for several minutes.

According to a French paper, the compound used for enamelling the iron vessels which are now so commonly used for culinary purposes consists of borax, 24 parts by weight; soda salts, 6; boric acid, 15; sand, 25; felspar, 12.5; nitre, 3.5; and fluor spar, 3 parts. Colours are obtained by associating with these ingredients different metallic oxides. The metal is dipped into the liquid mixture thus formed, and is afterwards dried and fired.

We had an opportunity recently of watching the new and interesting process of manufacturing flexible celluloid film for photographic purposes at the Eastman Company's 'Kodak' Works at Harrow, Middlesex. The liquid celluloid is run into sheets upon enormous plate-glass tables, by means of a travelling reservoir with an adjustable slit for the emission of the liquid. Powerful fans depending from the roof of the building drive off the solvents in the form of vapour until the celluloid assumes a solid and flexible form. By a somewhat similar travelling device, this celluloid now receives a coating of sensitive gelatine emulsion, and a few hours afterwards the compound film thus formed is stripped from the glass, cut into ribbons, and is wound upon spools ready for use in the 'Kodak' or other form of camera.

A member of the medical profession warns people against cleaning bottles with shot, which he declares to be a fruitful source of lead-poisoning, even if the bottle be afterwards rinsed out with clean water.

The landslip at Sandgate near Folkestone, which resulted in the demolition of more than one hundred houses, was at first attributed by the sufferers to the vibration caused by the blowing up of the wreck of the *Benvenue*, which has for the past two years formed a dangerous obstruction to navigation in Sandgate Bay. It is now proved that the explosion of the small charges employed had nothing whatever to do with the catastrophe. The area has always been liable to landslips, for the soft sandy soil when it becomes saturated with moisture is liable to slide over the impervious clay upon which it rests. A suitable system of surface drainage has now been commenced, and it is believed that the district will thus be protected from a recurrence of the calamity.

Experiments were lately made with the new explosive 'Ammonite' at a quarry at Netherton, near Dudley. The object of attack was a mass of marl slate computed to weigh more than one thousand tons. Three holes seventeen inches deep and three inches in diameter, and twenty-five feet apart, were charged with sixty pounds of ammonite and lightly tamped. On the charges being fired the whole mass was lifted and shattered from end to end. Ammonite is a yellow powder, which is said to be safe in manufacture and manipulation; it is not affected by changes of temperature, and does not deteriorate by keeping.

A wonderful dredger has been built for the

Mersey Dock and Harbour Board, Liverpool, whose experiments in cutting through the Mersey bar have been so successful that they have determined to increase their dredging operations, so that eventually the largest vessels can enter the river at any state of the tide. The new dredger is of gigantic size, and consists of a vessel three hundred and twenty feet long and forty-six feet broad. It is built throughout of steel, and has on each side eight large hoppers with a holding capacity of three thousand tons of sand. In the centre of the big ship is a well fitted with a sand suction tube of three and a half feet diameter, which can be lowered or raised through the bottom of the vessel by hydraulic power. The centrifugal pumps in connection with this tube—which will reach when required to a depth of forty-six feet—are capable of raising four thousand tons of sand per hour. The general plan of operations will be to fill the hoppers, proceed to the depositing grounds, and return for a fresh charge of sand; and it is said that it will under favourable conditions be possible to do this within one hour.

The Magnesium Flash Lamp, now so much used for photography at night, is by no means so 'instantaneous' in its action as some would imagine. Most portraits taken by this method show traces of movements of the eyelids, if the sitter looks towards the light. Professor Boys made the matter very clear in his lecture on Electric Spark Photographs, by revolving a four-foot clock dial very rapidly in darkness, and suddenly illuminating it by the magnesium flash. The figures upon the dial appeared to be so blurred that they could not be deciphered. When, however, the same dial was illuminated by the electric spark it appeared to be at perfect rest, although its periphery was travelling at the rate of forty miles an hour.

For the past half-century a valuable series of agricultural experiments have been carried out at Rothamsted by Sir John Bennet Lawes, and associated with him in this important work has been Dr Gilbert. In this way the application of chemistry to the cultivation of crops and the feeding of stock has been carefully studied, and the importance of the knowledge thus obtained can scarcely be overestimated. All these investigations have been prosecuted at the sole cost of Sir John Lawes; and for the continuance of similar experimental work after he is dead he has left the munificent sum of one hundred thousand pounds, besides his famous laboratory and a large area of land. In order to mark the completion of this fifty years' noble work, it is proposed to erect a granite memorial in the field at Rothamsted where the experiments have taken place, and to present the workers with a commemorative piece of plate. For the purpose of collecting the necessary funds, a Committee has been appointed, with the Duke of Westminster as chairman.

A balloon, called the *Aerophile*, of small size, was recently sent up from Paris for meteorological purposes. It carried, in lieu of a car, a box containing a self-registering barometer and thermometer. It fell many miles from the capital, and upon examination the instruments showed that the balloon had reached an altitude of between ten and eleven miles—far higher than

any aeronaut had ever succeeded in rising. The thermometer showed that the little balloon had penetrated to a region where the temperature was sixty degrees Fahrenheit below zero.

It is said that several acres of marshy ground on the banks of the Mississippi have been converted to a useful and profitable purpose in the formation of frog farms, the taste for these epicurean delicacies having been of late years developed to such an extent among our American cousins, that there is a daily demand of many thousands. The American breed of frogs has recently been much improved by the introduction from France of a variety of much larger size.

In the *American Naturalist*, Mr Stahl of Illinois extols the virtue of wood-ashes as a medicine for farm animals, and says that used with discretion no other remedy is required to keep animals in full health. For swine he makes a mixture of wood-ashes, charcoal, and salt, and keeps it constantly before them in a large box having holes in the bottom, through which the animals work it out as they require it. He also speaks well of the mixture for horses, and in thirty-seven years of experience of farm-life has lost only one horse, and that through an accident. The ashes may be administered by putting an even teaspoonful on the oats twice a week; but he thinks it preferable to place a mixture of three parts wood-ashes to one of salt constantly before the animals in a little compartment at one corner of the feed-box. Mr Stahl also has great faith in the value of wood-ashes when used as a fertiliser.

The very complete collection of Egyptian antiquities in the British Museum has lately been augmented by an object of great interest as well as value. It is a shrine of gray granite about ten feet in height, and weighing approximately eight tons. It is inscribed with hieroglyphic signs worked in relief, which is unusual, as the stonewriting of the period to which it belongs is generally executed in sunken characters. The colour of the granite points to the fact that the shrine must have been specially made for the temple at Philæ, whence it has come, as, although there is abundance of granite in the Cataract district, it is all red. There is no gray granite within some distance. The temples which adorn the island of Philæ are of the Ptolemaic period, and range between the years 300 and 230 B.C., so that, until the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the shrine be translated, which will probably fix the date, we may conclude it to belong to this period.

In ancient Egypt the shrine usually stood in the innermost and holiest of the innumerable temple chambers, and contained the emblem of the tutelary deity; but in Ptolemaic days the lifeless emblem was wont to be replaced by the living animal representation; and when Strabo, in the first century of our era, visited the great temple at Philæ, he was shown by the priests a large bird on a shrine, which they told him was a hawk; but he observed that it was larger and quite different from the hawks which he had hitherto seen in the country; moreover, it was very ill, and nearly dead. It is not impossible that this may have been the shrine in which dwelt not a hawk, but a vulture, the bird sacred to the Mother Goddess Isis, to whom the temple

was dedicated. The holes in the sides of the aperture may have been for bars or a grating, so as to form a cage for the sacred bird. In 450 A.D., when the Edict of Theodosius proscribed the ancient gods of Egypt, and was the signal for the fanatical destruction of the temples, a Coptic church was erected on the island of Philæ; and the shrine, ruthlessly dragged from its place, was turned on its side, and made into the base of a Christian altar. The church, like the temples, is now in ruins; and the little shrine, once the home of an Egyptian god, and since then connected with the holiest of Christian rites, is now, by the munificence of the Khedive, deposited in the British Museum, a venerable relic of the past, a link between Paganism and Christianity, and, to the archaeologist, of intense interest as being unique.

FROM THE TOWER OF SILENCE.

It happened in my father's time, early in the fifties. I have often heard him tell the story; and in looking through his papers after his death I came across the written account of it. It is my opinion that the dear old man jotted down the story in an idle hour, intending it for publication; but when his task was finished, the whim passed away; the manuscript was laid aside, and probably never saw the light of day again until I unearthed it from the drawer of an old secretaire last summer. I think the facts are sufficiently out of the common to be interesting, and therefore I give the story verbatim in my father's own words. I would merely add that, at the time the events transpired, my father was in the Honourable East India Company's service. The manuscript runs as follows:

In 1850 I was removed from Bombay to Kharabad, a small town at the western foot of the Ghauts between Bombay and Puna; and here I made the acquaintance of Mr Framji Jijibhai, a Parsee gentleman of most agreeable manners. He and I were near neighbours, and being brought much into contact with each other through business matters, quickly became fast friends. Unlike most of his race, Mr Jijibhai exhibited no great love for jewellery, and I never knew him wear any ornamental trinkets save a certain ring, which was never absent from the little finger of his left hand. This ring, which was of gold, was of the most exquisite Eastern workmanship, and contained a large opal of extraordinary beauty. I am no great judge of precious stones; but the gem was certainly one of the finest of its kind that I have ever seen, and the adornment of Mr Jijibhai's little finger must have represented a value of some hundreds of pounds in our money. One evening, while the Parsee and myself were sipping our claret in the veranda of my bungalow, I ventured to remark upon the beauty of this ring; whereupon my companion told me how it had come into his possession. It had been given him, he said, by a native Princess in return for some service of a peculiarly delicate nature which he had rendered her; and so highly did he prize the trinket, that he had given positive orders that when anything happened to him, and he paid the final debt to nature, the ring was not to be removed from his finger, but was

to be conveyed along with his body into the 'dokhma,' or tower of silence, where the vultures in stripping the mortal flesh from his bones might perchance carry the trinket away—none knew whither. Although highly romantic, it struck me at the time that this was a very foolish method of disposing of such valuable property; but it was no concern of mine, and consequently I made no remark upon it.

I do not remember whether Tip, my body-servant, was present in the veranda during our conversation; but subsequent events lead me to suppose that he must have been present, or, at any rate, within earshot. Tip—I don't suppose that was his correct name, but it was the only one I ever knew him by—was the biggest thief unhanged. His petty larcenies were a source of continual trouble to me; and had it not been for the recollection that he had once been instrumental in saving my life a few years previously, during an unfortunate riot at Bombay, he and I would have severed our connection long before we did. As it was, whenever he was detected in any act of dishonesty, he always made such voluble promises to reform, and reminded me so pertinaciously of the debt I owed him, that my resolution invariably fell before his importunities, and he was allowed to continue in my service, always, however, on the distinct understanding that this was his last chance. But I regret to say that Tip did not reform; and after an interval of a few weeks, the same scene, with the same results, would be gone through again.

One morning, early in 1851, I had a business engagement with my friend Mr Framji Jijibhai, which he failed to keep. This occasioned me considerable surprise, as the Parsee was, as a rule, punctuality itself in all business appointments. For fully an hour I had waited for him, when a messenger arrived to say that he was dead. He had died that morning so suddenly that the 'dastur' or 'mobed' (priests) had not even had time to repeat the prayers for the dying. The Zoroastrians only allow a very short time to intervene between death and the funeral ceremony; and just before sunset that same day the body of Mr Jijibhai was conveyed from his house to the tower of silence, his last resting-place, which in this instance was situated upon a lonely, tree-clad eminence, a little distance from Kharabad.

Some very mistaken notions concerning the Parsees' towers of silence exist, I believe, among the English at home. I remember seeing them described in the work of an eminent writer of adventures, who must have been woefully ignorant on the subject, as lofty towers, not unlike the dismantled round towers we find in Ireland, at the top of which were placed open gratings. Upon these huge grids the corpses—so says the writer I refer to—were placed, to be denuded of flesh by those scavengers of the air the vultures, until the clean-picked bones fell through the iron bars into the pit beneath.

Now, all this is very erroneous and misleading. In the first place, the dokhmas are *not* lofty towers. Proportionately, they are low, squat edifices, the total height rarely exceeding one-third of the diameter. Although they are all

built practically on the same plan, the actual dimensions of the towers differ considerably, the average and most common measurements being—total height from twenty to thirty feet, and diameter from seventy to ninety feet. In the second place, they contain no gratings whatever on which to deposit the bodies. As a matter of fact, the interior consists, with the exception of the 'bhandar' or pit in the centre, of a solid platform, the surface of which is only some seven or eight feet lower than the top of the parapet. The surface of the platform is arranged in three concentric rows of 'pavis'—large slabs of stone, divided from each other by stone ridges a few inches high—and it is on these pavis, in which channels are cut to drain off the rain-water into the bhandar, that the deceased Parsees are laid. When the vultures have plucked away all the flesh, the bones are allowed to remain until the sun has completely dried them, when they are flung into the bhandar to crumble into dust. The dokhma at Kharabad was, for some unknown reason or other, of unusual dimensions. The maximum height was nearly forty feet, while the parapet was not more than four or five feet higher than the platform.

Into this tower the remains of Framji Jijibhai were carried by the 'nasesalars' just as the sun touched the western horizon; and the funeral party wended its way sorrowfully back to Kharabad, leaving the vultures to their ghastly task. An hour later the moon arose, and as I stood in my veranda I could see the dokhma, where all that remained of my dead friend lay, looming black and sombre in the moonlight.

An hour later, too, I missed my servant Tip. He was absent about an hour and a half. During that time an Afghan shepherd who was returning home by a path through the thicket on the side of the lonely hill observed the figure of a Hindu moving stealthily out from the shadow of the trees into the open space surrounding the tower of silence, with a coiled rope over his shoulder. Hurriedly glancing round, to make sure that he was unobserved, the Hindu approached the dokhma and flung one end of the rope, to which was attached a bent piece of iron, intended to act as a grapnel, over the parapet. The first attempt was unsuccessful, for in hauling in the slack of the rope the iron fell back to the ground. A second and a third trial also resulted in failure; but at the fourth essay the improvised grapnel caught firmly. The next minute the man was swarming up the rope, and quickly disappeared over the parapet. Before many seconds had elapsed, he reappeared, and slid down by the same means he had ascended. To shake the grapnel loose from its hold, so as to leave no trace of his sacrilegious act, was a matter of some difficulty, but it was accomplished at last; and having again coiled up his rope, the man left the scene of his exploit, and the vultures which he had disturbed once more swooped down to their ghastly feeding-ground. That man—the violator of the aerial tomb—was Tip.

When he made his reappearance at my bungalow, I asked him to account for his absence. He told me with the utmost *sang-froid* that he had been to see his father, who was lying ill at the other side of the town; and I, in my ignorance of the real facts, believed him. That night, I

sat up late writing, for I had an official report to send away next morning to Bombay. But, somehow, I could not concentrate my thoughts on my work. My mind would go rambling away to that sombre tower upon the hill, and it was past midnight when my task was finished. At last, however, the concluding word was written, and with a sigh of relief I gathered together my papers and clapped my hands, a signal which Tip well understood.

Now, the room in which I had been writing was entered by two doors, one from the veranda, and the other exactly opposite it; and it was through the latter that my servant made his appearance in response to my summons. As I was sitting with my back to the veranda, I had a full view of Tip's villainous visage as he entered the room. One step he took beyond the threshold, then stood rooted to the spot, transfixed with terror. His jaw dropped, his eyes dilated, and the tray he was bearing fell with a crash from his useless fingers. The next moment he was shaking like an aspen leaf. Whatever was the cause of his fright was evidently behind me; but before I had time to turn round to ascertain what it was, a figure darted madly past me and clutched the trembling Hindu by the throat. The figure bore the form and features of my dead friend, Mr Framji Jijibhai.

At first I thought—as no doubt Tip did—that this must be an apparition; but I was not naturally superstitious, and instantly dismissed this theory from my mind. This was too substantial for a spirit. It was the Parsee in the flesh. His only clothing was his scanty funeral garb; and from his naked wrists the blood was streaming to the floor from several ugly, lacerated wounds. His face was ghastly pale, in spite of the natural swarthiness of his skin, and his eyes flashed with anger. The painful state of his wrists, however, did not prevent him from grasping my servant with an iron grip until the latter's eyeballs rolled in a frenzy of agonised terror and fairly bulged from his head.

'Where is my ring, you sacrilegious villain—you robber of the dead?' he demanded fiercely.

For reply the Hindu gurgled some inarticulate words in his throat, and fumbling in his turban with trembling fingers, produced the opal ring I had so often seen on Mr Jijibhai's hand. The Parsee released his hold and snatched his stolen property hastily from Tip. The latter no sooner felt himself free, than, making a bolt for the veranda, he fled howling out into the moonlit night; and to this day I have never set eyes on him again.

As soon as my friend's excitement had subsided, he fell helplessly into a chair, and I thought for the moment that he was going to faint from sheer exhaustion. I pressed food and wine upon him, bound up his wounded arms, and assisted him into a less airy garb, after which he recovered himself rapidly, and while I sat smoking my pipe, he related to me the following account of his terrible experience:

This morning (said he) when my friends thought me dead, I was in some strange state of catalepsy, which is all the more inexplicable to me from the fact that I have never before been subject even to the slightest seizure of that nature. Although to all outward appearances dead, I was painfully

conscious of what was going on around me; and you will readily understand the anguish I experienced when the doctor, having felt for my pulse, pronounced life to be extinct; and preparations were made for the funeral ceremony. I pictured to myself in ghastly colours all the torturous horrors of being plucked to pieces *alive* by the vultures, and yet I was utterly incapable of making any sign to those around me. The mysterious line of communication between the will and the muscles was cut off, and I felt myself doomed to be the helpless victim of a natural phenomenon. When I was carried into the dokhma and left lying upon the pavi, I mentally gave way to the direst despair, knowing as I did that barely an hour is, as a rule, required to denude the corpse of every vestige of flesh. As my friends retired from the spot, leaving me in my terrible loneliness, the vultures which had been hovering in the vicinity swooped down in a threatening cloud; and I wondered what part of my person would be the first point of attack. I had long ago given up all hope of escape, and now I only prayed that death would speedily come—that the vultures would begin the feast upon some vital part and relieve me from the tortures of a slow decease.

In this I was, happily, disappointed. Whether the birds of prey knew instinctively that the spark of life still smouldered in my breast, or the all-wise God who made both them and me miraculously restrained them in His merciful providence, I know not; but this I do know, that though they hovered and fluttered about me, sometimes so closely that they fanned my cheeks with the flapping of their wings, I was not harmed even by so much as a hair of the head all the time I lay there on the pavi, an inert body.

Night came on; the moon arose, and still I lay there unable to move hand or foot; the vultures, perched like so many sentinels upon the parapet, occasionally leaving it to circle round me, waiting for the spirit to leave the body. The suspense was as awful as it is indescribable. Suddenly the vultures rose and flew away. The next moment a rope was flung over the parapet and withdrawn. This occurred three times. The fourth time the rope caught somehow; and shortly afterwards the head and shoulders of that rascally servant of yours appeared above the masonry. Luckily the particular point at which he invaded the dokhma was directly in my line of sight, or I should never have known who the robber was, for, of course, I could move my eyes no more than I could any other part of my body. Springing lightly down on to the platform, Tip made his way to me, snatched the ring from my finger, and decamped the same way he came. No sooner had he gone than the vultures returned, and I was in exactly the same predicament as before. One big repulsive-looking fellow hovered so closely above me that he brushed my breast with his wings, and I thought he was about to pluck out my eyes, but he wheeled away again and perched on the parapet.

For hours I lay thus. Then suddenly I felt my natural power return to me, and I experienced a thrill of exquisite joy as I thought that the hour of my deliverance was at hand. My recovery was rapid; but I was weak from exhaus-

tion. I jumped up and capered about for very gladness, while the birds fled in alarm at my unexpected resurrection. But my troubles were not yet at an end. The outer wall of the dokhma is, as you know, a great height from the ground, and I knew that if I attempted to leap down I should probably break my neck. The facing of the walls was too smooth to afford me any hold to scramble down by, and I was in a desperate plight, for stay in that dreadful spot I could not. I felt that I must make my escape at all hazards.

In this awful dilemma I was inspired with a lucky thought, which I at once proceeded to put into execution. Resuming my old position, I lay perfectly still, and soon the vultures again returned, and flocked round me. Awaiting a favourable opportunity, I made a grab at one of the largest as he hovered menacingly not more than a foot directly above me, and was successful in catching hold of him by the legs. He struggled terribly, and pecked viciously at my wrists with the result that you have seen; but I stuck to him with both hands, like grim death, and, mounting the parapet, leaped into the air.

It seemed a terribly long time before I reached the ground; but my expedient proved successful. The huge bird's struggles to get away broke the full force of my fall, and I landed on *terra firma* unhurt, except for the painful state of my wrists. Leaving go my hold on the vulture, he rose in the air, and soared away; while I scrambled to my feet and hurried here to confront the rascal who had robbed me before he had time to make away with his booty.—The rest you know.

STREET SUPERSTITIONS.

How far readers in general may be aware of the fact we know not, but there are some superstitions which are largely existent among the bulk of the less educated classes of Londoners which are quite distinct from any cherished among the rural dwellers in remote counties where the antiquary delights to hunt for his favourite game. Long experience of all the varied phases of London life in the most crowded quarters enables us to assure the reader that what perhaps is new to him, and altogether unheard of in the classes which are of a superior type of education, is palpable fact, as a very short inquiry in the East End and similar localities would show. Where or how the London crowds first got these notions we cannot say; but they exist, and are familiar enough to the wayfarer. Hence we have called them Street Superstitions, as they are of the street, pure and simple in London at any rate, and perhaps in other large towns. They have nothing in common with country roads, lanes, and fields; yet they are credited by the shrewd, self-sufficient Londoner of the lower classes with as much unquestioning credulity as any ancient superstition, handed down through centuries, in the most benighted village.

Prominent among them is the London wayfarer's belief in the luck which follows seeing a piebald horse. To see one of these is to be the recipient, in imagination and anticipation at any rate, of a piece of good fortune. Not long ago,

in a leading thoroughfare we heard one of two youths, as such a horse was passing, tell his companion 'to take off his hat and spit—there was a lucky horse!' This formula seems indispensable. Whence the idea of these particular horses being lucky comes, it is hard to say. Possibly the notion is akin to that which is so old a one at home and abroad as to the magpies, whose foretellings vary according to the number in which they are seen, and the pied markings of horse and bird are very similar. Most East End Londoners are far more familiar, however, with a pied horse than a pied bird, save in a cage. Whether the superstition includes 'skewbald' horses as well, we do not know. But we know people who unquestionably credit the luck of piebalds.

Another superstition most prevalent among the lower classes, and especially the criminal ones, as the police Reports often show, is in the magic effect of a piece of coal picked up in the street. This is supposed to secure unvarying good fortune to the possessor if turned from time to time in the pocket. Coal, too, which is found in the gutter is far superior to that which is in the middle of the street. We have frequently seen people of both sexes carefully pick up and treasure these small articles, even running over from one side of the street to the other in a shower of rain. It may be here remarked that burglars in especial attach great importance to the possession of such a piece of coal when they are engaged in their professional occupations, which, perhaps, is something to the discredit of the article. It is impossible to fathom the reason which has induced this idea about a bit of coal found in the gutter, though some study of the matter has been made.

So, again, with a piece of wood or stick lying in the road. 'Pass a stick and pass your luck' is a common street phrase, and often you may see the ordinary pedestrian pick up some mud-stained bit of wood on his way. It is possible, by the way, that the old fable of the girl who, going through a wood, rejected stick after stick till she was obliged to put up with a crooked one, may have something to do with the origin of the notion. Be that as it may, the fact remains, that to a great number of Londoners to pass a bit of wood in the street without picking it up is to throw away a chance of good fortune.

Another and perhaps more deeply and generally rooted superstition of the streets is that as to cats—cats of two kinds, as a rule, though, with a smaller and more select circle, there is a strong predilection in the case of a third colour. However, the most general idea is as to the black cats. If one of these runs across the path of the wayfarer, still more if it runs towards him, it is a sign of notable good luck. To injure one is to be most unlucky in every way. If a London street cat, apparently out on its rounds, comes up to the wayfarer and rubs its head against him, he may take it as a most fortunate portent. As to white cats, it is not generally known, and perhaps not admitted openly by the men themselves, that they are supposed to be most unlucky by the class who drive night-cabs. In fact, so powerful is the idea, that in some cases a man who has taken his cab out of the yard for a night's work, will, if a white cat happens to

run across the street before him, return to the yard and abandon his project for the night, convinced that he will not on that occasion have any luck.

To a very small minority of people, the notion of good luck generally attached to black cats is intensified in the case of a tortoiseshell Tom cat, which is supposed to be a most emphatic omen of good fortune. It is curious to see how black cats, which, less than two centuries since, were always held in a certain amount of dislike and terror, as the supposed familiars of witches, and often as the witches themselves in animal form, should nowadays be held so widely as harbingers of good fortune.

Space compels us to be brief; so we will add one more specimen of street superstition as grotesque as any and as widely prevalent. Probably some vague tradition of the ancient influence of the Italian *mal occhio*, or evil-eye, has some connection with it. Should you meet a squinting woman, it is a most evil omen, and no more luck all the day will follow the fact. On the other hand, if you meet a squinting man, great good fortune will result!

'FOR LOVE'S SWEET SAKE.'

BECAUSE you have no golden hoard,
Or broad and fertile lands to show,
Or wealth in glittering caskets stored,
You fear to whisper—what I know.
You think 'twould be a grievous wrong
Me from my smother paths to take,
Nor understand how brave and strong
My heart could be for Love's sweet sake.

Because you are a man, you seek
To hide the tender pain you feel;
And I, a woman, should not speak
One word your secret wound to heal;
Yet, knowing well that each for each
Life's fullest harmonies could wake,
I fain would place within your reach
The gift of love for Love's sweet sake.

Because the ways you tread are rough,
Shall we two always stand apart?
Nay, let me own 'twould be enough
To share your weal and woe, dear heart!
If you must bear a daily cross,
Why, I will half the burden take;
And what you choose to call my loss,
Count truest gain for Love's sweet sake.

E. MATHESON.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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A NEW DEPARTURE IN MEDICAL TREATMENT.

VERY little is to be found in most works on medicine with regard to that structure in the neck called the thyroid gland, except that its enlargement constitutes the familiar disease called goitre, and that the strange condition called cretinism is in some way related to goitre. Till recently, the function of this organ was quite unknown. But within the last few years, certain obscure forms of disease have been shown to be closely related to the thyroid gland, and the work done in connection with them has led to such a remarkable new departure in their treatment, and to so substantial an advance in scientific knowledge with regard to this organ, that a short account of the present position of the subject, and the steps by which it has been attained, may not prove uninteresting.

The thyroid gland in man is situated in the neck, a little below 'Adam's apple,' which marks the top of the windpipe. It is of a deep-red colour, and is so freely supplied with blood, that its arteries are together just about as large as those which pass to the whole of the brain.

The disease called goitre, which is due to an enlargement of this gland, is very frequently found in various mountainous districts, such as the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Himalayas, &c.; and though not common in Britain, it is found in Derbyshire occasionally, and is there known as the 'Derbyshire Neck.' The other disease mentioned—cretinism—is found in the same mountainous districts above mentioned, and the name is derived from 'cretin,' which is applied to a certain dwarfed, thick-skinned class of human beings found in the Alpine valleys. They have broad faces, thickened features, thick coarse hair, and a wrinkled shrivelled skin, which gives them the appearance of old age. Their mental development, like their bodies, is dwarfed and stunted, but not to the same degree in all cases. Similar individuals are occasionally, but very rarely, met

with in this country, and are known as sporadic cretins.

In 1873 Sir W. Gull read a paper on what he called a Cretinoid State supervening in Adult Life in Women. In 1877 Dr Ord more fully described the same disease, and proposed for it the name, now universally adopted, of Myxœdema. This disease is rare, but presents such distinctive features that a well-marked case is quite unmistakable. It generally comes on during middle life, and affects women much more frequently than men. Superficially, it presents but little resemblance to cretinism; the stunted growth and shrivelled skin are conspicuous by their absence; and it is not a little remarkable that Sir W. Gull should so long ago have divined the close relationship of the two diseases. The face is much swollen and broad; the features heavy and expressionless; the hair coarse and scanty; the hands thick and clumsy; the skin everywhere thickened, scaly, and destitute of perspiration; the whole body enlarged, heavy, and awkward. The mental features of the disease are equally characteristic; the perceptions are dulled, speech and movements slow, and there is a great loss of energy and of ability for exertion. The bodily temperature is much reduced, and the patients are very easily influenced by cold, and always worse during cold weather. At the first glance, the disease might be mistaken for a form of dropsy; but the swelling is felt to be firm, and does not retain the impression of the fingers, as in that case it would. In one of Dr Ord's cases, where a post-mortem examination was performed, the swollen skin was found to contain a much larger quantity of *mucin* than is normally present; in consequence of which he gave the name Myxœdema, or mucous swelling. He observed, moreover, that the thyroid gland was in a state of degeneration.

A number of cases were soon reported by other observers, so that no doubt could be entertained that this was a distinct and hitherto unrecognised disease. Some cases were benefited by treatment to a certain extent; but on the whole, till 1891,

Myxœdema, though very slow in its progress, had proved one of the most intractable and hopeless of diseases.

Meantime, however, light had been thrown upon the meaning of the disease from an unexpected quarter. In many of the valleys of Switzerland, visitors cannot have failed to observe that a large proportion of the population have swellings on the front of the neck, some of them of a very large size. This is goitre. In the great majority of cases, these goitres produce no deleterious effect upon the health, and no inconvenience, except from their size. In some districts, indeed, they are regarded as decidedly ornamental. Occasionally, however, they cause pressure upon the windpipe, and threaten to stop the passage of air through it altogether; and it is on this account that their removal has usually been performed.

In Switzerland, therefore, where goitre is common, it was natural that relief from its occasional discomforts and dangers should most often be sought; and it was there, accordingly, that surgeons had most experience of its removal. In 1882-83, Reverdin and Kocher, two Swiss surgeons, described a peculiar train of symptoms which had come on some time after complete removal of the thyroid gland in some of their patients. These symptoms were lassitude, loss of activity, slowness of thought, speech, and movement, thickening of the features, and general swelling of the body. Their descriptions were published in ignorance of the accounts of Myxœdema which had been given in this country. The singular correspondence between the two conditions was not long in being noticed; and when it was first pointed out in this country by Dr Felix Semon, at the Clinical Society of London in 1883, it was regarded as of such importance that a Committee of the Society was appointed to make inquiry into the whole subject. The results of its elaborate investigations were published in a substantial volume in 1888.

In connection with the work of this Committee, Professor Victor Horsley undertook a series of experiments on animals, in which he obtained very remarkable results. He confirmed the observations of others who had found that dogs die very soon after removal of the thyroid gland with muscular tremors and other symptoms, due to disturbance of the nervous system. But in monkeys he showed that the operation is longer survived, and that the symptoms found—lowering of temperature, thickening of features, loss of hair, &c.—closely correspond to those seen in man both after removal of the thyroid gland and in the spontaneous disease called Myxœdema. It was these experiments which first definitely warranted the conclusion that the cause of the symptoms of Myxœdema is loss of function of the thyroid gland.

Experiments had also been made in another

direction which led to still more important results. Continental observers had shown that if thyroid glands be removed from healthy dogs, and implanted in the body of another dog, its own thyroid may afterwards be removed, in some cases without any bad result. In the cases where this happened, it was found that one at least of the transplanted thyroids had, so to speak, taken root, and was growing in its new situation; but the operation may fail in spite of very great care in its performance, and this result is not always attained.

In 1889, a patient suffering from the effects of removal of the thyroid gland had a sheep's thyroid transplanted into her tissues, and was temporarily benefited. In 1890, without having heard of this experiment, Professor Horsley suggested the same treatment for Myxœdema, and it has been adopted in a number of cases. Some relief usually results from the operation, but it is in most cases only transient. No doubt the difficulty of getting the gland to take root is much greater than in the case of the dog, because it cannot be taken from another individual of the same species.

One circumstance, however, was noticed and remarked upon by those who were watching the results of the operation. Improvement of the symptoms began *within twenty-four hours of its performance*. It was clearly impossible that the gland should have taken root and become active so soon: to what could this rapid improvement be attributed? Might it not be that the juice present in the gland at the time of its implantation was absorbed into the blood of the patient, and so produced this surprising effect?

Reasoning upon this observation, Dr G. R. Murray of Newcastle conceived the happy idea of extracting the juice from the thyroid gland of a sheep and injecting it through a fine hollow needle into the tissues of the patient. The first case in which he adopted this treatment proved a signal success; and an account of it, published towards the close of 1891, attracted general attention. Many other cases have since been treated in this way, and almost all with more or less benefit.

But the disadvantages of this method are considerable. The preparation of the extract from the gland requires very great care; the injection of it needs always to be performed by a practised hand; and in spite of every precaution, abscesses sometimes result from the injections. Last year, accordingly, several medical men independently tried the effect of administering the gland or its extract by the mouth; and it was found that this simple method produced just as good results as the more complicated one.

The results obtained have been very surprising. In almost all cases some improvement has resulted. Some have lost four stones in weight, and become active and lively instead of dull and apathetic. Some who were almost bald have grown a new, thick crop of hair. Some who had for years been incapacitated for work have been able to resume their occupations. One patient was so changed in appearance that her own daughter failed to recognise her, when she went into the hospital ward where she was under treatment, to see her after a few weeks' interval.

The treatment has also been applied to some

cases of sporadic cretinism in this country, with, if possible, still more astonishing effects. The children's apathy diminishes, their expression becomes intelligent, and they begin to take an interest in things about them, and to play as they never did before; their bodily growth, which had been almost arrested perhaps for a long period, takes a sudden start, and they may increase in height at the rate of an inch a month, instead of perhaps hardly as much in a year.

The improvement lasts only so long as the patients continue to take the remedy; a few weeks' cessation is generally sufficient to show that the old condition would speedily return. But it is little hardship to have to continue to take a small powder, or a few drops of liquid, or even a little morsel of raw meat, every few days during the rest of their lives. Time only can show whether it is possible by this means fully to maintain the benefit obtained at first; but there is every reason to expect that it will be so.

These results have not been obtained without some failures and mistakes. It was but natural, considering the contempt with which the thyroid gland has generally been regarded, that it should be administered at first by some of those who tried it in what we now know to be far too large doses; and in some cases these produced unpleasant and even alarming effects. Such mistakes should be easily avoided in future; and there seems no doubt that in this method of treating Myxœdema we have one of the safest, most certain, and most satisfactory of our means of dealing with disease.

We have advanced considerably, too, in our knowledge of the function of the thyroid gland. We know not only that it is necessary to the health of the body, but that it acts by elaborating and supplying to the blood some substance or substances without which it cannot properly nourish the tissues. What the nature of these substances is remains to be discovered. They must be identical or very closely analogous in man and the sheep, pig, and ox; for the thyroids of all these animals have been found to supply equally well what is wanting in patients whose thyroids have lost their activity.

We do not yet know, but shall doubtless soon learn, what is the effect of administering thyroid gland in considerable doses to healthy individuals. Some experiments have already been made in its use in other forms of disease than those known to depend on loss of function of the thyroid gland; but it is too soon yet to be able to pronounce on their value, though they are such as to suggest great possibilities of future usefulness.

There can be very little doubt that an organ of such importance as the thyroid is now known to be, must be subject to disturbances of a lesser degree than the almost complete loss of function which leads to the symptoms of Myxœdema, and that these disturbances must lead to disorders of the general health. Such disorders, if they exist, are at present quite unknown; and it must be one of the tasks of the future to unravel their symptoms, and to separate them from other forms of disease; when this is done, it will no doubt be found that here too the thyroid treatment has a large field of usefulness.

But this new treatment has possibilities of expansion in other directions. May it not be that other organs in the body have actions analogous to the thyroid, and that when their activity is deficient, the want may be supplied by the administration of extracts of the corresponding organs from the lower animals? This has already been done to some extent with regard to the digestive juices; how much farther it may be possible to extend the method, if at all, is at present quite uncertain. There is no doubt that the vista opened up by this new departure will not be fully explored for many years to come.

Meantime, the results of the thyroid treatment are sufficiently established to afford much cause for congratulation. More than a hundred individuals suffering from one of the most intractable and hopeless of diseases have been relieved, some after ten, fifteen, or even more years of distress. Some have merely had their condition alleviated; some have been practically cured, and restored to full vigour and activity.

How, then, has this result been brought about? First, undoubtedly, by the patient and painstaking investigation of obscure and apparently uninteresting forms of disease; but secondly, and no less certainly, by experimental investigations upon animals. Without these, it is doubtful whether we would yet have arrived at the definite conclusion that Myxœdema and sporadic cretinism are due to loss of function of the thyroid gland. Without these, we could never have discovered that the thyroid gland in animals plays a part so closely analogous to its function in man. Till this was known, who would have dared, even had the idea occurred to him, to attempt a transplantation from one of the lower animals to man? And even if this had been known, it is extremely doubtful if the experiment would ever have been tried in the human subject without previous proof of its feasibility and usefulness in the lower animals themselves.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XIX.—IN THE OPIUM DEN AGAIN.

ALAN AINSWORTH had not gone far in search of Mr Raynor—no farther, indeed, than two or three turnings beyond Isabel's lodgings—before he reflected that he had no exact information to guide him. Isabel had been able only to tell him that her father had gone, probably, to the opium den, which was in a horrible lane off the Ratcliff Highway; but he might, on the other hand, have gone somewhere with Doughty, since Doughty, too, was missing. Doughty, moreover, knew the way to the opium den; Ainsworth, therefore, concluded it better to seek Doughty first. He thought he knew where he might lay his hand on him; for that ancient and astute Bardolph of journalism had during their short acquaintance given him the privilege of several private and peculiar conversations, in which he had spoken

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of many of his lonely ways and shady haunts. From these conversations Ainsworth had gathered that Doughty, whenever he was depressed or in trouble, low in spirits or in pocket—both of which were conditions frequently recurrent—acted on Dr Johnson's saying: 'Let us take a walk down Fleet Street.' Ainsworth, therefore, took a hansom to Temple Bar, and walked down Fleet Street, looking in at several well-known houses of call by the way. At a certain ancient and mouldy place of refreshment in a turning off the eastern end of the street, where many generations of roysterers and steady drinkers had heard 'the chimes at midnight' from the steeple close by, he found his man. Doughty sat with a crony in a remote corner of a long, low room, in which were a good many steady toppers. Ainsworth was some little while beside them before they were aware of his presence. Doughty seemed in his most solemn and portentous mood.

'Francis,' he was saying, 'I could find it in me to do a big drink.'

'So could I, Alexander,' said the other; 'but how is it to be achieved?'

'I have it, Francis,' answered Doughty, after a moment's thought: 'by a tremendous pop!'

'Of what, Alexander?' demanded the other.

Ainsworth thought he had overheard enough, and tapped Doughty on the shoulder. Doughty turned, shook him by the hand in a manner most impressive and protracted, and invited him to sit down.

'I cannot stay,' said Ainsworth. 'I am on my way to find your chief, and I want you to help me.'

'I will help you, Mr Ainsworth,' said Doughty, 'when I have had a toothful of refreshment. Will you kindly call for a biscuit and something to help it down?'

'Did you know that your chief was gone off?' asked Ainsworth.

'Know? Does the jackal know when the lion is on the war-path? Most certainly I knew. It was the knowledge that drove me forth to wander like a maniac among the tombs. It was the thought of what his admirable and adorable daughter, Miss Raynor, might think of me that drove me thus far. This is not a fit place, Mr Ainsworth, in which to mention her noble Christian name; but I murmur it with infinite respect.' After a moment's pause, he continued: 'He eluded me. When he is bent on it, he can elude even me; and I have been with him for a countless number of years, and I have studied him, and I know him and his capacities through and through, and I venture to tell you, Mr Ainsworth, that the chief could write the whole *Encyclopædia Britannica* himself if he liked.'

'And if he had the time,' added Ainsworth.

'—and if he had the time,' solemnly repeated Doughty. 'But I do not stand in any awe of him. We have been like brothers for a countless number of years. It is of Miss Raynor I stand in awe; she makes me ashamed; she makes me think of Una and the lion (of course you are aware, Mr Ainsworth, that I am alluding to a

certain passage in Spenser, the poets' poet). How can I ever look her in the face again?'

He took off his hat, looked into it desperately, and sadly put it on again. The refreshment was brought, and Doughty at once made disappear the lighter part of it. The crony—who seemed to be to Doughty much what Souther Johnny was to Tam o' Shanter—then observed aside to Ainsworth that Doughty was wonderful: the more refreshment he took, the soberer and steadier he became! As if to prove that saying true, Doughty rose, breaking his biscuit, and declared to Ainsworth that he was ready; and forth they both marched.

Doughty was of solemn opinion that the chief would be in 'the thick' of his opium sleep, and that it might be as well to wait until he was likely to have had it out; but Ainsworth represented that he had promised Miss Raynor to find and bring home her father with all possible speed, and that she would be anxiously waiting for his return. Upon that Doughty acquiesced, and in his most portentous manner called a four-wheeler; and they rumbled and rattled away eastward through a region that was as yet little known to Ainsworth.

The cab was left, as on a former occasion, near the top of the noisome lane, and they went on on foot, pursued by the curious looks of the policeman on 'fixed-point duty.' Doughty led the way on, and into the den, and Ainsworth followed with his attention at its utmost stretch; for this expedition was the most novel and romantic he had ever engaged on. The singular literary reputation of opium had hold of him, of course, but he was conscious of very little falling off in the realisation of what his fancy had expected: the sickly-sweet fumes of the opium were so peculiar to the sense, and all objects seen through the brown haze—swimming, writhing, and rolling—took such strange, soft, and distant shapes. He was startled by the sudden evolution from the smoke—as if he were the genie of the place—of the grinning, slant-eyed Chinaman. He manifestly recognised Doughty, and knew his errand. He beckoned them, without a word, down the room, and pointed, with a bow, to a figure spread out on a mattress, with an opium pipe between the fingers: it was the chief. Ainsworth, on recognising him, at once stepped forward and shook him to wake him.

'No, no, no!' cried the Chinaman, frowning and gesticulating. 'Him muchee sleepee! No good!'

But the shake had a certain effect: the chief opened his eyes for an instant, and then took another position. He turned on his side with his knees drawn up and his head thrown back; he smiled and murmured:

Raynor of gold and jewels,
Raynor of silver and pearls;
Raynor of red,
Raynor of white,
Raynor of coral and ivory!

And then he slid away again into complete silence and slumber. The words made an impression on Ainsworth. They haunted him ever after: they had such a musical cadence, that one was tempted to find them charged with meaning; and yet they were but nonsense, with the faintest possibility of sense: a bit of poetic dross touched with gold.

'You perceive,' said Doughty, 'that it is of no use attempting to get him away now. We must patiently wait. In the meantime we must see that he gets no more opium from Johnny Chinaman when he wakes; and I think I had better go and send the cab away: it will run into a great deal of money to keep it waiting.'

'I think, however,' said Ainsworth, 'it had better wait.'

'Then,' said Doughty, 'we had better give the cabman a trifle for refreshment. I have no change: can you oblige, Mr Ainsworth?'

Ainsworth quite understood the remote purpose of this suggestion, but he had not the heart or the hardihood to refuse to accede to it. So Doughty went out with a silver coin. At the end of half an hour he had not returned, but the chief still slept on. Johnny Chinaman came and made the proffer of an opium pipe; but Ainsworth declined it: at another time, alone, he thought, he might not be indisposed to try the experiment; but now, when he had undertaken a sacred duty, he could not. So he sat on a stool and waited till he became drowsy, and then he rose and walked up and down.

In one of his walks he paused and listened to the soft, disjointed murmurs of a sleeper. The voice sounded to him like one he had heard before—where, he could not remember. The voice first arrested his attention, but the things uttered gradually held it.

'Observe,' said the voice, 'the time that is proper and the season actually of the thing. . . . He will be a great sinner to look for the ripeness of business and articles in *Panguni*, and to have expectation of the fruit to drop in *Chittarai*. . . . I appear as a gentle cow, but to tell the truth with regards I am a hungry tiger. . . . Wait, wait, Daniel! With regard, be as the hungry beast in the jungle! . . . The young Sahib is like the blind man who has thrown his staff into the air; oh, yes—very; he is playing the part of the foolish person and son. . . . *Venkaiyum! Karuvéppilai!*' . . .

Ainsworth went near, and had his suspicion confirmed: he recognised the words and the person as those of Daniel Trichinopoly. But he gazed and wondered. The sleek and gentle Daniel now looked no better than a truculent lascar or coolie: his turban was off and disclosed a bare shaven head; his clothes were gone—all except a loin-cloth—and revealed a brown figure of incredible thinness and wiriness; but he wore a most ferocious frown. Ainsworth did not understand the foreign words that he used occasionally, but he remembered them, and discovered afterwards that they were Tamil. He did not turn away, but still listened; for he did not doubt that 'the young Sahib' was George Suffield, and that in some crafty, underground, Oriental way Daniel was devising mischief against him, if not against the house of Suffield.

'*Venkaiyum! Karuvéppilai!*' repeated Daniel (that is, Onions! Curry-leaves!)—'No, no; Daniel will make curry not any more, thank you, Sahib. Daniel in soon time will have plenty cash. . . . The young Sahib is the foolish person. . . . He makes with regard plenty too much noise. . . . Daniel! Daniel! All right, Daniel!' (that in imitation of a loud manner; then sinking into his own low, oily tone). . . . 'Oh yes; all right,

Daniel! With regard, Daniel knows, Daniel smiles, Daniel laughs in the trouser of his arm, . . . and Daniel waits. . . . Why, O daughter of my people, do you cry there for kanji? . . . Wait, and in soon time I fly to you as the wind, and you have plenty kanji and cash! . . . Yes, indeed and very truly. But even the wizard Tummatipattan himself was caught at last—yes, although he turned and escaped here and there! . . . The Black Water! . . . Oh! the Black Water rushes! Oh, the Black Water goes over! . . . Oh! the Red Fire! . . . It burns! It burns up! . . . Oh!' he yelled, 'I drown! I roast! I burn!'

With a final yell, he bounded out upon the floor with fiery, rolling eyeballs, and dashed his hand as if to his sash to clutch a weapon. In an instant the Chinaman was between the opium-smitten Daniel and Ainsworth.

'London man stand too muchee near,' said he, putting Ainsworth back with a frown. 'Velly good no kniffee! Johnny alway takee kniffee way!'

Johnny took his panting, trembling patient by the hand, led him back to his place, and helped him into his bunk; and Ainsworth returned to look at Mr Raynor. What he had heard, wandering and disjointed as it was, made a deep impression on him; and the concluding *tableau* gave him a significant lesson in racial characteristics: 'However smooth and civilised,' said he to himself, 'the Asiatic may appear, scratch him and you find the savage!'

The chief still slept on, murmuring at intervals soft musical nothings to himself; his gentle condition under the opium being in marked contrast with that of the truculent Daniel. Ainsworth sat on the stool and wearily waited. No Doughty came; but opium devotees—chiefly swarthy lascars or sallow and bilious-seeming Chinamen—slipped in and out silently like ghosts. With much ado Ainsworth kept awake; for he feared to drop asleep: he knew not what might befall him if he lost consciousness: the Chinaman passed silently now and then and cast an evil, slanting eye on him, and he knew that most of the occupants of the brown Hades must be, when awake, ruffians of the most unscrupulous and desperate character. A strange company, indeed, for the gentle, cultured John Raynor to choose to frequent.

One hour, two hours passed. Still the chief slept on; and still Doughty did not return. Three hours passed, and Ainsworth became very anxious: the time was creeping close to midnight, and Isabel, he knew, was waiting in the extremest uncertainty. He had a mind to attempt again to rouse Mr Raynor. But presently Mr Raynor relieved him by waking and calling softly for 'Johnny' and 'more.'

Ainsworth stepped quickly over to him. 'Mr Raynor,' said he, 'don't you think it is time you came home?'

'Home?' echoed Mr Raynor, and shook himself and looked at Ainsworth.—'Oh,' said he, 'Mr Ainsworth! Here? I hope you don't come here often! Dreadful! dreadful!'

'I have only come here for you, Mr Raynor,' said Ainsworth; 'I have a cab waiting for you. Come, and we can talk by the way.'

At that Johnny Chinaman came up, and Mr

Raynor endeavoured to give orders for further pipes, but Ainsworth kept urging: 'No, no, no!'

'Permit me,' said Mr Raynor. 'I will not—I cannot—be dictated to in this manner. But I have a regard for you, Mr Ainsworth; and when I have had one more pipe to steady my nerves—I need positively one pipe more: I know myself completely—then I'll come with you.'

How the matter might have ended there is no saying, had not Doughty appeared. In his presence the chief collapsed, half-sulkily, and permitted himself to be led away without a word: much to Ainsworth's amazement, till he considered that the persistent subjection at such a time of Mr Raynor to the one man he knew of unconquerable nerves must have become an ingrained habit.

So the erring father was recovered, and borne home in the waiting four-wheeler to his waiting daughter. He hung his head before her, smiled a sickly smile when she tried to rally him into cheerfulness, as if nothing had happened, declined to eat any supper, and went to bed, escorted by the faithful, silent, and penitent Doughty.

Then Ainsworth told Isabel of all his adventures and experiences, by no means omitting that one which had most impressed him: how he had seen and overheard Daniel Trichinopoly. They agreed that though all he had heard might have no more meaning than the wandering of one lunatic or fever-stricken, it had at least that meaning, and it seemed likely that there was sufficient behind it to take note of. They agreed also that Mr Suffield should not be troubled with this matter, since they both had plainly understood that the control of the mills and the Lancashire business in general were now committed entirely to George; but that it should be communicated to 'the young Sahib' himself, who had engaged Daniel, to make what he could of.

Therefore, when Ainsworth returned to his rooms a little later, he sat down and wrote to George Suffield. He said that certain business had taken him to an opium den in the East End, where he discovered Daniel Trichinopoly—the Indian or Cingalese person who, he understood, now enjoyed some position in the house of Suffield. He then related the curious things which he had overheard, and left it to George to judge of their consequence.

IN ICELAND.

Hour after hour we had jogged along in the pelting rain, seeing nothing from under our lowered son-westers but the muddy legs of the pony in front, hearing nothing—all conversation having long died out—but the splash of forty hoofs along the brimming paths, or occasional clatter over a naked lava rock. Now and again we would reach a stretch of turf where the path broke into a maze of narrow channels continually uniting and diverging again. Then the pace would quicken, and with much shouting after those that chose too devious courses, and jostling of saddle-boxes, the whole cavalcade would scurry across to where—seldom far off—the roughness of the ground once more compelled a creeping

line, of which my friend and myself brought up the rear. Occasionally the mist would lift a little, revealing for the most part wastes of black sand around us, and jagged lava cliffs beyond.

It is not to be wondered at that they are a grave and silent people who inhabit such a land. The earth that innumerable seasons have moulded for us into a pleasant and fruitful home is here still a primeval chaos; the original heat, that is a mystery of geology to us, is here an ever present reality. But 'the land has two lords that are deathless,' and the other is even less relenting. Not a decade passes but some winter the great ice-sheet will drift down from the north, and not only round the beleaguered coast, but far inland, the next summer will be but a cruel fiction of the calendar. To these people, Nature must, consciously or not, appear not as the bountiful provider, but as a grim divinity, with whom, for a meagre subsistence, one must unceasingly wrestle, not always prevailing. One wonders not so much that they spent their time in the days of the Sagas trying to kill each other, but rather that they ever left off fighting, seeing how little life must have been worth, and how much any excitement. Surely of all the movements Westwards that make up so much of History, no stranger and bolder has been recorded than the voyage, ten centuries ago, of those Northmen who sailed over a thousand miles of ocean to the black desolate land, where only the ominous raven seems at home.

Now the last hill is surmounted, and across the swollen and turbid river there loom through the mist the little black turret and cross of Stathr Church, and the grassy roofs and many gables of the farm. Forging the river, we notice two children herding cattle, standing indifferently in the ice-cold water, with the rain pelting down on their bare heads, to watch us pass. Then by a turf-walled lane, ankle-deep in mud, we struggle to the pavement of lava blocks that runs round the whole farm buildings, and forms a sort of 'quay,' to which the ponies are brought alongside. We were tired after our ten hours in the saddle, somewhat damp in spite of water-proofs, and very cold, though it was August; for though the sun is often warm in Iceland, the air never is. Therefore, our hearts sank when we saw no cheerful glow from the window, no smoke from the chimney. The yelping of the little shag dog brought to the door a pleasant-looking girl eighteen. She was dressed in the national and absolutely universal costume of the island: a long plain black dress, and a black silk cap with a very long tassel passed through a broad silver ring, and hanging down on to the shoulder. This sombre costume was brightened, however, by a coloured bow, with a beautiful old silver necklace over it.

Entering by the middle gable, we groped our way through a passage encumbered with all manner of implements and clothes, to the kitchen. We had tried to put out of our minds all ideas of the brightness and warmth of a farm kitchen in England, but some little comfort we had expected till now. A room it could scarcely be called, a cellar rather, a hole in the roof serving for window and chimney. On a great stone table that took up about half the floor-space, a fire

of brushwood—there is no other fuel in many districts, and not that even in some parts—was filling the whole place with blinding smoke. Furniture there was none except a plank propped on stones. On a beam above the fire hung an array of stockings, drying in the smoke. Half-warmed at last, and more than half-suffocated, we escaped to the 'guest-room,' which, but for the want of a fire, was fairly comfortable. Soon the savoury smell of ptarmigan frizzling in butter under the skilful hands of our guide, told us that supper was not far off. With fresh black bread, delicate little turnips and potatoes from the garden patch, and a bowl of the national *Skaer* (sour curds) before us, we began to feel better. But the crowning mercy was yet to follow—the fragrant coffee freshly roasted and ground, with unlimited thick cream. Never once did it fail us in Iceland, however little we expected from the outward appearance of our halting-place.

Then arose the question of lodging. The room we were in was small and musty, and the window was not made to open, while the air that got in at the door was worse than nothing. We decided, therefore, to sleep in the church, having been assured that that was quite an ordinary proceeding in Iceland. Of course there was no well-cushioned family pew in which a night's sleep would be only an extension of a Sunday nap. One of us chose the floor; the other, suspicious of rats, tried an ingenious arrangement of benches; but a midnight catastrophe put us on a level, and on either side of the altar, watched over by some faded saints, we slept soundly till daybreak. The outlook then was depressing—everywhere the mist lay thickly. In the drizzling rain, two women were milking the sheep huddled together in a pen. Beyond, on the marshes, now showing sheets of water, a group of men were engaged on the farm-labour of Iceland—mowing, or rather shaving, carefully with sharp little scythes, the innumerable hummocks into which the frost cuts up the land, and which reached far as one could see, like an extension of the graveyard beside us. On the other side was the farmhouse, five long grassy roofs, over which a lamb was peacefully browsing, ending in as many brightly painted gables; the walls of alternate turf and stone, and very thick. The whole seemed more like a great burrow than a building, but looked picturesque and warm. Beyond it was the well-cultivated *tún*, or 'fore-acre,' all above the level of the morass around.

Seeing no prospect of more birds for dinner, we resolved to make an attempt upon the smoked mutton and pickled isinglass of the country, but failed miserably, and had to fall back on our own supplies of tinned provisions. With books and tobacco and frequent coffee, we managed to get through that day; but when next morning broke with not the slightest change, our thoughts turned longingly to the billiard table in the hotel at Reykjavik. We would have pushed on despite the weather; but our next halt was to be under canvas, and though we were prepared to face rain when once established, our hearts sank at the thought of pitching our tent and digging the necessary trench round it in such a downpour. Stay we must, then, and if so, some amusement must be found. Our light literature was at an end; of more solid reading we could stand only

a limited amount. We began by examining the old communion plate locked up under the altar, then we explored the attic above the church. This was a success. First we found an ancient brass side-saddle, elaborately ornamented in *repousse* work, with a crupper bearing a verse from an Icelandic poem. We had seen the same sort of thing in the museum at Reykjavik, and secured this one for the price of a new saddle. For the rest of our journey it was strapped on one of the spare ponies, causing occasional surmises at our halting-places as to what had become of the lady. Next we found some old guns, the parts of a handloom—for weaving is carried on in all farmhouses during winter—and lastly, a box of old books, many of them in beautiful old bindings, but too far gone to bargain for.

Having exhausted the church, we turned our attention to the house. From the window opposite, the girls of the family—Ingebjorg and Guðrún were their quaint names—were looking out at the pouring rain, evidently as weary of it as we were. We reflected that the ordinary civilities of a call meant in themselves pretty nearly nothing, and that it would not, therefore, be much of a drawback that we knew only about a dozen words of Icelandic, and they rather less English. Before we left home it had occurred to us that the Icelanders, being intelligent and well educated, but entirely cut off from intercourse with other people, would probably be much interested in pictures of the distant world, and we had therefore provided ourselves with a supply of photographs of whatever we thought would be most unlike the country we were going to. With these as excuse we crossed, not without difficulty, to the farmhouse, and were shown into the *bathstofa*, a long low room with a line of box-beds on either side. Here in most farmhouses almost the whole household sleeps, though in this one there was a separate small room partitioned off for the girls. Here also the eating goes on, one cannot say the meals, for there are none. Each takes what he wants when he likes, sitting on the edge of his bed.

We found our host reading poetry, of which Icelanders are usually fond. The photographs took immensely. 'Windsor Castle and Park,' 'The Interior of Westminster Abbey,' and most of all an instantaneous view of Hyde Park, excited evident though not demonstrative interest. They lasted most of the afternoon, and were borrowed again in the evening. After these, 'Pigs-in-Clover,' already forgotten in England, but a complete novelty in Iceland, served to pass another hour. Thus we got through the second day tolerably, and went to sleep with the feeling that surely Sunday would bring a change in the luck. Alas! we did not need to look out next morning, for the wind and rain had been loud on the windows all night through, and though the day showed occasional signs of grace, it was little better than the others. There was to be service in the church, only an occasional event in Iceland; so the guns and camera had to be removed from the pulpit betimes, and all made ready. As twelve drew near we could see little groups of riders bearing down upon us from all quarters, across the now almost flooded plain, and the field beside the church soon became lively as a horse-fair. To walk any distance in Iceland is almost

impossible—except sometimes in winter—owing to the want of roads and bridges, so that every member of the congregation within was represented by a pony without. These were tied in pairs, head and tail, so that they could not wander. Then came the dressing. Each woman had come in a voluminous black skirt and jacket, as a protection from the mud, but these were all taken off and laid upon the chair-saddle. On this also the hat was left, every woman in the church appearing in the national head-dress and jewellery. Time is not reckoned with pedantic accuracy in Iceland; long after the service had begun, people came dropping in, while several left before the end. The church, holding about fifty people, was well filled, a remarkable fact, considering the distances that separate the farms, for there are no villages. Some travellers have argued from the apparent absence of religious observances in the farmhouses that the Icelanders are an irreligious people; but we were assured that summer is looked on as a 'close-time' for family worship, as well as for the children's schooling, everything being sacrificed to the hay harvest.

Long after the close of the service, the people hung about the church, chatting and exchanging letters and parcels, for it is thus that the rudimentary postal service of the island is supplemented.

As the day wore on, the curtain of mist slowly lifted, and we saw for the first time the range of hills that bounded the vast morass; and above them, far away to the east, the long ridge of Hecla, with the eternal snow lying on the eternal fire. Shortly after sunset the whole sky cleared, and a faint light in the north-east foretold the first aurora, a sign of the waning of summer. It seemed at first like the reflection in the sky of some vast moving light below the horizon, then as a veil of luminous cloud, but so delicate that the lightest of the real clouds seemed solid when entangled in its meshes. Soon a corresponding light rose from the opposite horizon, and the two meeting above us, gradually moved northwards till they formed an arch over the glow of the sunset. Long after the household of Stathr was sunk in sleep, we stood watching the sky, till the frosty night air drove us indoors.

Next morning we were awakened by the blessed sun streaming in at the windows, and found a cloudless sky, such as we had not yet seen in Iceland. Our stage was to be a short one, so we gave up the morning to taking photographs about the farm. Gúthrun had promised us she would dress herself in the beautiful gala costume of the country, only worn on grand occasions, such as a wedding; and thus we successfully photographed her. Then the girls nailed blankets over the window of their room, and the developing was watched with much interest. As we finished, the ponies were being driven in, and the laborious tying and strapping began again. After settling our very moderate bill, and purchasing some of the cloth that is spun, woven, and dyed on the farm, we said good-bye, surprised to find that it was not, after all, such a relief to get off. As we rode away slowly across the swamp, there gathered on the roof of the barn a sombre group of girls, the dogs crouching beside them, and the lamb nestling above in the

lee of a chimney. Silent and motionless they stood looking wistfully after us; and when long after we turned round, there was still the spot of black upon the green, till we reached the lava desert, and in the swirling clouds of dust, the farm, hills, and all disappeared from sight. J. C. O.

THE RED-HOT NEEDLE.

By H. F. ABELL.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

OCCASIONALLY, the monotony of every-day life in the Far East is broken by a veritable thunder-clap of news, some startling announcement, which by its interest makes ample amends for the almost absolute dearth of topics for conversation and discussion characteristic of ordinary times. Such was the case in the month of July 188-, in the far-distant port of Yokohama, Japan. The Comprador of the Pacific Bank obtained leave to take a short holiday of a few days, and did not return. In the meanwhile it was discovered that he, taking advantage of the tremendous power he could exercise by virtue of his position as trusted controller of the native business, had been systematically robbing the bank for some months past, and that his defalcations amounted to the very pretty sum of fifty thousand dollars, or ten thousand pounds sterling.

Ambrose Burdon, the bank Manager, who had been up country, was of course immediately sent for, and came to Yokohama with all haste. Burdon was a strange man, of reserved manner and retiring habits, who was classed by all who were acquainted with him as incomprehensible. He was a fine, tall, fair-haired Englishman of forty, with a face which instantly impressed strangers favourably, but which—so said men who knew him—was capable of being transformed with an expression of absolute malignity when its owner was annoyed and disappointed. Of his personal habits and predilections, little or nothing was known, even in a small place where the actions of the most unimportant individuals were always liable to microscopic examination, except that he loved money. For money, it was whispered, he would do anything. The only amusement he shared with his fellow-countrymen was play, and this in the face of the fact that he was generally unlucky. How he spent his leisure time, nobody knew; but strange stories were afloat about him, amongst which was one to the effect that he had been met at a remote inland village far off the beaten track alone with Ah Why, the Comprador, whose disappearance was now agitating the community.

Of course the meeting with the Chinaman *might* have been accidental, or the Manager and his Comprador *might* have been up country upon some delicate and important business which demanded secret negotiation; but the public is generally ready to judge an unpopular man harshly, and so, when the news of the robbery became known, over more than one tiffin table it was whispered that if anybody could throw light upon the affair it was Ambrose Burdon. Nobody, however, could have been more dumfounded and amazed at the news, and nobody could have taken more prompt, decisive measures for the apprehension of the fugitive, than the Manager. 'Just my

luck!' he bitterly exclaimed. 'I find the branch almost insolvent; I set to work, and I make it the most paying branch east of Singapore, and then this happens!'

All efforts to trace the whereabouts of Ah Why were fruitless. Men noticed in the meanwhile that Burdon grew more haggard in appearance, and more restless and unsettled in manner; and he became the object of general sympathy, for it was known that he would be severely dealt with by the bank authorities.

During the week which followed, Burdon learned his fate. The Hong-kong letter informed him that the Inspector of Branches would arrive in Yokohama by the next mail for the purpose of making a searching inquiry into the affair, and that he was to hold himself in readiness to leave for England at any moment, in order to explain matters to the Board of Directors. Burdon took it very quietly, and made an excellent meal after it. Then he lit a cigar, told his boy to place the long cane chair in the veranda, and proceeded to digest other letters brought by the mail. The first he opened bore the Chancery Lane, London, post-mark, and was as follows:

'DEAR SIR—In our last communication we informed you that in accordance with instructions from your late uncle, Mr Hercules Tunstall, we should open the letter he indited some time before his death, which said letter was not to be opened until six calendar months before your cousin, Miss Ruth Tunstall's coming of age. Acting on your behalf as co-trustee for the deceased gentleman's estate, we have carried out this instruction, with the following result'—

(Here he was interrupted by the appearance of his boy with a note. Burdon always disliked interruption. At this moment it was particularly ill-timed, and his face assumed the bad expression which men knew it could assume under pressure.

'Confound you'—he began. The boy handed him the note. Burdon examined it, and his face brightened. 'Who brought this?' he asked.

'That piecey China steward on board English mail,' replied the servant.

'All right! Can do!' said Burdon; and the boy disappeared. Burdon put the note unopened in his pocket, and proceeded with his London letter.)

'With the following result. With the exception of a few legacies, amongst which is one of a hundred pounds per annum to you, the whole of the deceased gentleman's estate will pass to his daughter, Ruth Tunstall, upon her attaining the age of twenty-one years. Should she die before attaining the age of twenty-one years, you, as the next of kin, will inherit the property. We have of course not yet informed Miss Tunstall of this, and shall await your instructions.—Yours faithfully,
TAPER & SEALE.'

'Lucky girl!' was Burdon's comment; 'and I, when I get the sack from the bank, shall have a hundred a year to live on.—Well, what's next? One from her, by Jove!' He opened a letter addressed to him in the delicate feminine hand which young ladies so thoroughly despise nowadays, and read:

'MY DEAR COUSIN AMBROSE—I think I ought to write and tell you of my own great news before all others, although you may think me selfish for so doing. John Felling, the head of the open Bill Department in your head office, asked me to be his wife last night, and I accepted him.'

'Great heavens!' muttered Burdon. 'There's a young fool she's made herself, and with thirty thousand pounds coming to her! There's one thing: he doesn't know it, and she doesn't!')

'And I accepted him, and am the happiest girl in the world. I tell you before anybody else, even before my aunts, because I know how great an interest you take in me; and I don't think you will be so angry with me, a poor girl, for marrying a poor man, as they are sure to be. But John is getting on so well that he tells me not to fear, and that all will turn out for the best. So don't be angry, my dear cousin. You know I always have my father's allowance of a hundred a year; John has two hundred and fifty; and when I come of age I suppose there must be a little something for me, although I know it cannot be much, as you remember how poor father was always lamenting his poverty.'

'Stingy old dog!' growled Burdon; 'never gave a cent away in his life; dressed like a junior clerk, and all the while was making dollars hand over fist!')

'So, you see, we shall be able to live quietly and decently.'

'When are you coming to see us? It seems so long since you were in England. Jack is such a good fellow, and I think he grows more like what I remember you to have been, every day; and when I put the two photographs together, the likeness is absolutely ridiculous, the more so because you are utterly unconnected with him, and must be quite ten years older than he is. He is very worried and anxious just now; but he doesn't tell me what it is about; so I hope it is nothing serious. My aunts desire to be most kindly remembered to you, and would dearly like one of your chatty, amusing letters. Good-bye, my dear Cousin Ambrose.—Yours very affectionately,
RUTH TUNSTALL.'

Ambrose Burdon refolded the letter slowly, and sat for some moments looking ahead of him with eyes which saw nothing for the raging waves of thought which tossed through his brain. Then he suddenly remembered the note brought by his boy, and took it from his pocket; rose, tore open the envelope, withdrew a thin paper, which he submerged in his washing-basin, and held up to the light.

'That's all right!' he muttered, after studying the paper for some moments. 'My part of the bargain is completed; and now for his. I have made him a free man. Let us see if he will make me a rich man.'

Ambrose Burdon dined at the Club that night. He said nothing about the news brought by the mail; but he soon perceived that it was known, and was astonished to find that there were so many who sympathised with him. He was never a jovial companion; but it was remarked that upon this occasion he was much more nearly

jovial than usual, and that he seemed to regard very lightly what was generally understood as a very critical period in the career of a man who, by the business measurement of years, might still be accounted young. He drank freely; and when he left the Club at eleven o'clock, he was in an elated condition very unusual with him.

At half-past eleven a 'jinrickisha,' conveying a closely muffled-up figure, dashed through the European settlement, passed down Curio Street, down the Basha Michi, and, just before reaching the railway station, pulled up. From it alighted Ambrose Burdon. He paid the coolie, turned down a narrow street of poor shanties, and after some examination of the signs and emblems with which they were hung, knocked at the shutters of a better sort of house, which, by the sign of the three great white balls suspended over the door, he knew was a druggist's. After a considerable delay, during which Burdon fidgeted uneasily and muttered what were probably not beatitudes, the shutter was opened a few inches, and a voice demanded who was there. Burdon replied in Japanese; the entrance was opened a foot or two wider, and he was admitted. He walked through the outer shop to a back room, where, over a brasier of charcoal, a Chinaman sat huddled, with an opium pipe at his side. He was a very old man, more like a mummy than a being of flesh and blood, and a large pair of horn spectacles on his nose added to his uncanny appearance.

'I am the gentleman referred to by our friend Ah Why,' said Burdon. 'Here is my letter of introduction.' So saying, he handed the thin-paper note he had received that afternoon to the old man, who examined it with minute attention, every now and then darting a glance at Burdon, as if comparing him with a written description. The old man then rose with more alertness than his appearance gave him credit for possessing, went to a cabinet, touched a spring which opened a secret drawer, and from the drawer took a packet, which he examined by the light of the oil lamp.

'Did you ever see a man starved to death?' he asked suddenly, and speaking excellent English.

'Once—yes,' replied Burdon, 'in the street at Wu-chang on the Yang-tse.'

'Very well; I shall be starved to death if this is traced to me,' said the old man.

'I'll take care of that,' said Burdon impatiently, for the Chinaman was fondling the packet, as if unwilling to part with it. 'Come—it's getting late!'

The old man handed him the packet. Burdon saw that it was marked with a single broad, arrow-headed line in red, with characters beneath, and asked the signification thereof.

'That means Red-hot Needle,' replied the Chinaman.

'Red-hot Needle!' exclaimed his visitor. 'What does that mean?'

'Have you never read the classics?' asked the old man.

'You mean your classics?—Mencius and all those fellows? Why, my good man, I don't know a sign of your lingo,' said Burdon. 'But what do they say about the Red-hot Needle?'

'Nothing,' replied the old man gravely. 'But they tell you what became of Hai Wang, the

Mandarin of Soochow, who put the fresh tax on copper; what became of Ah Qui, the faithless wife of General Ming; what became of the Hai Ling brothers, seven of them, who— But never mind! You give me receipt?'

'Why?' asked Burdon.

'For my protection,' replied the Chinaman.

'You don't need it,' said Burdon, and without another word left the shop.

CURLEW LORE.

It is not only 'upon the moorland' that 'lonely curlew pipe.' As the inland shooter in such wild districts comes across these melancholy birds, so the seashore wanderer with a gun, which is the exactly appropriate phrase, finds the curlew even more familiar to him—familiar, that is, by sound and sight at a distance, rarely by the actual possession of a shot bird. And on the whole the curlew is far more familiar to most by sound. That eerie, melancholy whistle, which when heard in the gloaming amid the ripple of the waves, as they betoken the ebbing tide, seems so much in unison with the scene on a winter evening, is a sound which one never forgets, though all one's after experiences may be of inland shooting. No wonder that in some parts of the old world west of England that wild thrilling note is held to have something mysterious about it. In one locality the notes of curlews at night are called the sounds of 'Gabriel's Hounds;' in another, those of the 'Seven Whistlers.' In most, so far as the locality of which we speak is concerned, these birds are looked upon in a different light from others. Without going so far as to say that the same opinion exists about them as that held by the Irish west-coast peasants of the wild swans—namely, that those who shoot them will probably find some fatal or serious misfortune follow—there is yet in some of the localities to which we allude an idea that in all respects the curlews are ill-omened birds—an idea which in connection with gunpowder is no doubt a satisfactory one for the birds.

This local idea, however, is by no means widely spread; for over many a marshy and moorland district, and along many a coast-line, there is every disposition to expend gunpowder on the curlew, if only there be a chance of getting within range. This, however, is a matter of comparatively rare occurrence. Few birds, except perhaps the wood-pigeon, are as shy as the curlew, and each has as keen a perception of the proximity of a gun as have the rook and crow, both of which know it as well as the keenest hand in Birmingham. The curlew in winter, however, is among the valued trophies of the shore or moorland shooter; and not without reason. The bird is, as has been said, one of the wariest; hence, a successful shot necessarily implies much perseverance, and as we all know, 'the labour we delight in physics pain.' And the curlew when skilfully cooked—and there are various ways of eliminating the fishy taste, which in some birds is not more than that in a wild duck—is to many palates a dainty dish. That it is far more familiar than it was is evidenced by its now frequent

appearance in the game-dealers' shops in London and the great towns.

The curlew is an interesting and, in its way, a handsome bird. To many inhabitants of inland parts of the country it is utterly unfamiliar; but its grayish-black plumage and long curved bill, delicate in its sense of what Dugald Dalgetty calls 'provaunt,' as are those of the snipe and woodcock, are as well known as they are prized by the shooter whose beat extends over the sea-shore, the marsh, or the moor. The curlew, like some other birds, is paradoxical in its breeding-time; for while it is ordinarily one of the most persistent birds in keeping its distance from all human intruders at the time of nidification, in the months of March and April—when of course nobody who is fit to carry a gun shoots at anything but rabbits, and perhaps the birds may know this—the curlew assumes an audacity which is quite different from its ordinary conduct. If you happen to be walking in any of its breeding-places on the higher grounds, which slope away from the coast, or inland by some marsh or mere, the bird flies near you, whistling continually. Its eggs are big ones, and pale in colour, often laid under a furze or whin bush. At nesting time the Welsh farmer calls the shrill note 'the curlew's swearing,' and thinks it prognosticates rain. Like the landrail, the youngsters at first are quite unlike the old birds. As in the case of the landrail with regard to their colour, so in the case of the curlew that characteristic length of bill which distinguishes the family is for some time absent.

Though essentially a shore-going bird—our own personal experience, and we have followed many, gun in hand, is far more derived from this class than from the moorland birds—the shy, wary, circling curlew, which seems like the gull to be most in touch with sand and wind and waves, will sometimes be found, as much to the shooter's as to the bird's astonishment, in fields of pasture or root-crops. It loves a succulent diet, even as do the snipe and woodcock, but with the distinction that its food is more saline than fresh. However, those birds found in the fields are as eager as are rooks and gulls—frequently found there also in stormy weather—for grubs, snails, worms, and such 'small deer.' The main food of the majority of curlews is, however, found on the sands and at the ebb tide. Then it is that curlews, ducks, plovers, and various smaller shore birds industriously explore the increasing expanse of gleaming wet sands as the ripple of the receding waves goes lower and lower. Little hollows are left full of salt water; tufts of seaweed, brown, green, and crimson, here and there variegate the yellow sands; and various forms of food are exposed to the eager beaks of the winged crowd on the shore; while the big black-backed gulls, usually hunting in couples, plod with deliberate powerful wings—and always flying against the wind—along the margin of the tide, with keen restless eyes that note the smallest edible object. Among all this crowd, however, those that keep most successfully and continuously out of the reach of the gun are the curlews. They use those long curved beaks in corkscrew fashion, and thus obtain various small shell-fish; but unlike the oyster-catchers, who sometimes will crack the shells, the curlews are not particular, and having

an ostrich-like digestion, swallow such dainties whole.

This dainty diet makes the curlew in its turn a dainty, to such as do not object to something of a fishy flavour. Our ancestors had a fine expansive taste in the way of table-birds, as a study of ancient chronicles, bills of fare, and 'house-books' proves. They held the curlew in much higher estimation than we do; and it may be that our modern self-sufficiency in this as in some other matters underrates our ancestors' wisdom. At any rate, when we consider the relative value of money past and present, and recollect the old rhyme—

A curlew, be she white or be she black,
She carries twelvence on her back—

it is clear that the bird was reckoned not only as one of the most edible, but also of the most valuably marketable kind.

We have said that the curlew is about the most difficult bird of all to get a shot at with any reasonable chance of success, unless, indeed, by one of those exceptional incidents which come within the experience of every shooter. But there is a way of getting such a shot, and that is by calling in the aid of the incitement of curiosity, which, indeed, has proved perilous to many other creatures than curlews. If haply on a winter's afternoon—that is the best time—you pause on your long-shore wanderings, and not unwillingly 'rest and be thankful' behind some coign of vantage, such as an ancient piece of wreckage, or a crag, or anything of a similar nature, and raise your cap in the manner known to skirmishers in action behind trenches when they want to 'draw the enemy's fire,' the usually wary birds—provided nothing else of you be visible—will gradually circle round nearer and nearer to investigate this unknown object, until at last they come within range. Then it is your own fault or your gun's—which, by the way, usually gets the blame in the case of non-success—if you do not succeed in dropping one or a brace, though the latter is a much rarer eventuality.

Various ancient and curious superstitions—some of them ancient indeed—cluster round the curlew. In some places the old inhabitants would not shoot at them 'for love or money.' These ideas differ in different localities. Some hold, as in the case of the robin, that the curlew's shooter finds his hand shake for ever after. Others, that sleepless nights, haunted by the bird's melancholy whistle, will be the result. Others, that no luck will attend the house in which the shooter lives until the next hatching-time. To recapitulate all these beliefs would make too great a demand upon space. In spite of them all, the average 'rough-shooter' in winter considers the curlew as a valuable addition to his day's gains.

Hitherto, we have spoken of the ordinary curlew. There is another individual of the race far less known. The stone curlew loves the downs and fallows. As its name shows, it prefers such localities as these where there are many flints and similar stones, which, indeed, by the wonderful adaptability of Nature, help to conceal the young, the similarity of the plumage and the hue of the surrounding stones being so great as to

deceive the ordinary eye. This is the case with other shore-birds, of which perhaps one of the best instances that can be mentioned is found in the ring dotterels, which in spring are to be seen continually running about on the higher part of the beach, and always where pebbles predominate over sand. Stone curlews thrive well among the stones, and enjoy the succulent diet in the shape of grubs and worms which are to be found in the fields; while the young birds run like land-rails, and the plumage so exquisitely matching the surroundings, renders them, when crouching, most unlikely to be seen.

A MISUNDERSTANDING.

By CHARLES EDWARDS.

I.

THERE was trouble in the minds of the three inmates of Bethel Cottage. The three were Mrs Griffiths and her daughter Nancy, and their lodger John Chester, who worked in the Penlyn slate quarries of Nantlle, whose pits were famous far and wide for their fearful depth. Mrs Griffiths was a widow. Her husband's death had endowed her with a small annuity, which, with the money she received from young Chester, sufficed for the simple needs of the household. Nancy was nineteen, and John Chester was five-and-twenty. As the girl was exceedingly pretty, and as amiable as she was pretty, and as John Chester was as susceptible to feminine charms as most men of his age, that which might have been foreseen duly happened. Though young Chester had only been in Nantlle six months, he was fast in love with Nancy. He believed the girl returned his love—though hitherto he had not dared to ask her, for he was a proud, sensitive fellow, and he dreaded an unwelcome reply, which would have compelled him to leave Bethel Cottage for ever.

This was the trouble. A letter had come that morning from Reuben Tallack, saying that the writer would be in Nantlle late in the evening, and that he hoped he might venture to come bag and baggage to Bethel Cottage, as in the 'dear old times.' Those were his words, and he underlined them with two thick strokes. Further, as it appeared that Reuben had written from some foreign port to Mr Penlyn, asking for employment in the quarry, and had found a favourable reply awaiting him at Southampton, it seemed likely that he would remain in Nantlle for a considerable time.

At the first reading of this letter, Mrs Griffiths had expressed the utmost pleasure at its contents. So too had Nancy. The girl's eyes became suddenly so bright and beautiful, and there was such a sweet flush on her cheek, that John Chester felt like a man who had received a stab in the heart.

'I don't know,' Mrs Griffiths had exclaimed, 'when I had better news. I shall be very, very happy to have him here again.'

Nancy seemed to take the same view of the matter.

But Mrs Griffiths chanced to look towards her lodger, who had ceased eating his breakfast, and she changed all in a moment. Nancy also turned her eyes upon John Chester, and she grew pale because of the thunder-cloud on the young man's face. Then, with the briefest of excuses, John Chester had risen and taken his work-coat and set off for the quarry, cursing his luck, and wishing with all his heart he had never set eyes on Nancy Griffiths's sweet beguiling little face.

When they were alone, the two women appeared to dismiss their lodger and his eccentricity wholly from their minds.

'We must,' said Mrs Griffiths cheerily, 'give him your own little room, Nancy dear. It is what he will like best. Oh, my dear, if only he could be with us always, as when your poor father was alive!'

To this the girl made no reply, for she was thinking of John Chester, though she seemed to be more particularly engrossed with the geraniums in the parlour window.

'There is,' continued the widow, with her chin in her hand and a reflective look in her eyes, 'no young man, in my opinion, to be compared to our Reuben.—Don't you think so, Nan?' she asked, with momentary animation.

'Yes, mother,' replied the girl, still with her eyes on the plants.

'What other young man in all Wales, I should like to know, would have stayed with us as he did just because your father on his deathbed asked it of him? And that wasn't the half of what he did for us, Nan, though I never thought it was wise to tell you about it. I'll tell you now, though, my dear, because you've grown from a girl into a woman.'

'I don't think I have, mother,' murmured Nancy, this time glancing at Mrs Griffiths, and with that fair rose-bloom suffusing her cheeks afresh.

'Oh, but you have, my dear,' insisted the widow. 'I was married at twenty myself.'

'What *has* that got to do with it, mother dear?' whispered Miss Nancy. She had risen at these words and put her arms round her mother's neck. Her cheeks were burning. The consciousness that this was so alone restrained her from pressing them against her mother's cheeks. She did not wish to be asked for an explanation of their torrid state; nor did she wish for the medicine with which Mrs Griffiths was sure to dose her if she could not tender a satisfactory reason for their unusual warmth.

'It has much to do with it, Nan,' replied Mrs Griffiths. 'Reuben Tallack worked for me and you, my dear, just as if he was the very best of sons to me and of brothers to you. But for him, I don't know, I'm sure, if the debts we owed would ever have been paid; and I am quite sure I should never have got the insurance money—they bothered me so with their letters and disagreeable suspicions.'

'Yes, mother; I know Reuben was very, very kind,' said Nancy.

'"Kind" is a poor word to express it, my dear Nan.'

'Why, mother,' exclaimed the girl, abruptly drawing apart from the widow, and looking as if

she were going to ask an unanswerable question—'why did he leave Nantle as he did—without saying "good-bye" even to us? I have hardly forgiven him for that yet.'

'I will tell you, Nancy,' replied Mrs Griffiths. 'Sit down, my dear little girl.'

'Do you mind very much if I keep standing? I don't feel tired enough to care to sit, and I'll pay just as much attention to what you say, mother.' With these words, Nancy seemed rather to belie herself, for she straightway went to the canary in his cage and offered the bird her dainty little finger to peck at.

'Very well, my dear; I won't make a long tale of it, either. It was just this. Poor Reuben lost his heart to you from the very first, Nancy, and there's no denying it. You were only sixteen then, and he didn't like to speak about it to me or any one. And you grew more and more dear to him—those are his own words, Nan—as the months passed. Even when you were eighteen last year, he thought you were too young to be spoken to on the subject.'—

'Indeed, yes,' murmured Nancy, so softly, however, that Mrs Griffiths did not hear her.

'And,' continued the widow, 'it was just for your sake, and nothing else in the wide, wide world, that he went away and took that sea-trip. He was a quick-acting sort of young man, was Reuben, for all his noble, steady determinations; and that was why he went off as he did, leaving a letter, and asking us to keep his things for him. But I know as well as I know yourself, my dear little Nan, that he's coming home now to settle it all. He's had that sea-voyage with his uncle, and he's been thinking of you all the while he has been among the wild waves of the stormy ocean; and now he wants you to make him happy.'

'Mother,' cried the girl, 'you ought not to talk like that; you can't *really* know that he means that!'

'Gently, gently, my dear. I feel that I know Reuben as if he were my own boy. His letter doesn't say anything about it, of course; but that's natural. It's only proper, though, that you should be prepared; and that, my dear, is why I tell you all this.'

The girl's face had, while her mother was speaking, shown much emotion—to the canary. Latterly, her lips had begun to quiver in rather an ominous way. Now she could contain herself no longer. 'Mother, mother,' she cried, like one acutely hurt, 'I don't want to have Reuben ask me to be his wife. Why can't he stay away?' Then she put her pretty crimsoned face into her hands, and, dropping upon the sofa, sobbed bitterly.

Mrs Griffiths, good woman, was first amazed, and afterwards extremely distressed. She did all she could to soothe her little Nancy, and reproached herself strongly for the want of tact with which she fancied she had exposed Reuben Tallack's secret.

'Come, come, my poor lamb,' she crooned, as she clasped the girl in her arms. 'I'm a silly, good-for-nothing old woman, and was wrong to tell it you like that. Don't fret so, Nan dear. Look at your poor old mother and say you forgive her, and she won't grieve you again in the same way.'

Mrs Griffiths said much more to the same effect. She was not a very wise woman, though good and true-natured to the core. The upshot was that Nancy at length took heart, wiped her eyes, smiled like the sun through an April shower, and shortly afterwards fell to caressing her mother in her turn. The widow was easily persuaded to promise not to think anything more about Reuben's supposed designs upon her daughter's heart. After all, it might be as Nancy assured her: that she had taken young Tallack's communications too seriously; and besides, so long an absence was quite enough to drive the love out of his heart, if ever it had really been in it.

But though Mrs Griffiths yielded to persuasion, as the day advanced she became less and less convinced. The womanliness in her sympathised with Reuben in his hopes, even as the maternal instinct in her made her yearn to conciliate Nancy at all cost.

Nancy, too, as the hour approached when Reuben would be with them, felt more and more uncomfortable. How could she face Reuben, believing as she did in her heart that he loved her as only the noblest and strongest natures can love, and that he meant to do all he could to win her, and knowing that she did not love him as a girl ought to love her heart's true and only lord?

As for John Chester, when he came in to dinner he looked blacker than ever. He was a handsome dark fellow, with eyes such as women admire. He said little during the meal, which he ate with a shockingly poor appetite. The only words he uttered with any show of interest were these: 'I suppose there's no doubt Mr Tallack'll be here to-night?' and being assured that there was no reasonable doubt in the matter, the old shadow on his face darkened yet deeper. He misread Nancy's anxious expression altogether. And so he returned to the quarry with thoughts and aspirations even darker than his countenance.

II.

Reuben Tallack came by the evening train from the south. The happiness in his eyes was a sight to see. Even Nancy for the moment seemed to forget the awkwardness of her situation in her gladness at shaking hands with him.

'I've a secret to tell you,' he said, very soon after his arrival; and he looked at Nancy, who did not meet his glance.

'Time enough for that, Reuben, my dear lad, by-and-by,' interposed Mrs Griffiths quickly.—'And here comes John Chester,' she added, with relief, as she nodded towards the window. The click of the latch had warned her of her lodger's approach.

'John Chester!' exclaimed Reuben—'who may he be?'

As that person himself entered the room even while he was speaking, the introduction was made formally. He did not attempt to recommend himself to Reuben by his manner.

'I hear you're coming on at the works,' he said with a sour look, as he held out his hand.

'That's so, lad,' replied Reuben, shaking the hand heartily. 'I'm main pleased to come back to the old place. There's special reasons for it.'

—Yes, you may well colour up, little Nan. I'm much mistaken if you won't know more about them same special reasons soon yourself.—She's grown *almost* pretty since I left, mother' (he was wont to call Mrs Griffiths 'mother'); 'but I knew she would.'

In her heart the girl was quite angry with Reuben for these words. Yet they were what she might have expected, supposing that her own and her mother's anticipations were to be realised.

As for John Chester, he just bit his lip and turned away.

'There's not much amiss with her, Reuben,' said Mrs Griffiths. 'And she's a good girl, which is better than being a pretty one.—Surely, you're not going, John?'

'I guess I am,' was that young man's reply. 'And I shan't be in till late. I'm going to the club. You'll like to talk over old times, you three.' So saying, with a nod, John Chester went away. But he did not go to the club; he merely returned to the quarries. For two or three hours he stayed there brooding, on the edge of the most fearsome of the holes that had been dug in the earth for the removal of the slate from the rocks. The excavation was fully three hundred yards deep, with sides nearly perpendicular, and hung with ladders in two or three places, connecting the different small perches whereon the men did their quarrying.

As the light fell, the noise of the evening shift of workers in the quarry died away. Only in one section of the mine did it continue. This was where the rocks yielded a greenish slate, for which there was at that time a particular demand. Lanterns were slung at this end of the pit, and the sound of the blows soon echoed eerily in the darkness.

John Chester was an impulsive, impressionable man, with the average faults of the Celt as well as his average good qualities. It seemed to him that he had been made a fool of. Mrs Griffiths had that afternoon hinted pretty plainly why this fellow Tallack had come back to Nantle. He could not understand it altogether. Until twenty-four hours ago, he could have sworn that Nancy's heart was his, and no other man's. He clenched his fists as he sat thus musing, and peering unconsciously into the bottom of the pit, where the water lay so green and still. In the starlight it was merely a pool of ink; but by day it was green as an olive.

There were tales told among the miners of the dead men who lay in the bottom of the pool. Few believed these legendary stories. Yet they were possible enough; for the water was deep, and though Nantle was ordinarily a well-behaved little place, occasionally quarrels broke out among the miners, and men were missing now and again, without apparent rhyme or reason.

John's thoughts now took a wicked turn. The sweat stood in drops upon his face, though the night was cool rather than sultry. He fidgeted as he sat, but still the sweat oozed from his pores, and by the placid light of the stars you might have seen the intensity of his troubled reflection marked by the wrinkles on his forehead. At length he stood up, nodded his head like one resolved, peered once again into the pit, and then turned away with a shudder. 'He shall not have her,' he muttered.

He walked along the quarry edge until he came to a little chamber excavated laterally in the rock. A lamp was burning inside. Having knocked at the door and received an answer, he entered. A man was there at a desk, with his hat on, and smoking a pipe. He seemed surprised to see Chester. But the other did not give him time to speak.

'I've called, sir, to ask that Tallack and me may work together, if you've no objection. He's the new hand that comes on to-morrow, and he's lodging with Mrs Griffiths. I'd like to have the teaching of him, sir.'

The foreman laughed. 'All right, Chester. You needn't have come down here this time o' night for that.'

'Thank you, sir,' answered John Chester. 'I'd a bit of a headache, and I thought I'd step out, and so I came along here.—Good-night, sir.'

'Good-night to you.'

This settled, John Chester left the quarry yard. But he did not return to Bethel Cottage. He passed the door, stopped for an instant, and listened to the eager talking that was in progress behind the lighted window—with the canary and the geraniums sketched in shadow upon the blind—and then went on up the valley. If he had walked for two or three brisk hours, he would have come out by Lake Cwellyn at the foot of old Snowdon. But he did not do that; he crossed some meadows to the right until he reached the still gleaming waters of the Nantle Lake. Here he sat down again and resumed his brooding. The breeze from the east, whispering up the valley from Snowdon's top, did not seem to cool him much, for he loosed his necktie and acted more than once as if he were oppressed for breath.

He did not return home until past ten o'clock: Reuben and Nancy had gone to bed by then. Mrs Griffiths was very kind to John; but he rebuffed all her efforts to induce him to eat something, late though it was.

The next morning, however, John Chester came down to breakfast in quite a different mood. There was a certain unnatural levity in his conduct. 'I was a bit off colour, yesterday,' he said to Reuben apologetically. 'I'm a surly brute sometimes—ain't I, Nan?'

'You're not always *just* the same, John,' replied the girl, with a sweet but rather constrained smile.

'Oh, never mind,' exclaimed Reuben cheerily. 'We're all like that at times. I expect I'll be a bit down to-night after a day's work. Coming straight from the sea, you know, a fellow feels being tied down to ground-work.'

'And that reminds me,' observed John, as if he had but just thought of it, 'that you're to work in my section. I'll put you up to it, if you like.'

'Thank'ee; nothing will please me better.'

Ere they left the house, Nancy managed to catch John apart from the others. She looked at him so that he longed to clasp her to his heart; his eyes showed the fervour of his passion.

'John,' she whispered, 'it was kind of you to be like that with Reuben to-day. You are a dear good old fellow, John.'

At these words he started aside in a frenzy, and the veins on his brow swelled and became purple

as a damson. There was an oath on his lips, and he could hardly keep it from breaking loose, though he had never yet used strong language before Nancy Griffiths. The girl was horror-stricken. She watched him swing out of doors and bang the garden wicket behind him, and her heart grew heavy as iron in her.

A minute or two later, Reuben Tallack was ready to follow John Chester. He seemed surprised that the other had not waited for him. 'What made him go off like that? He's a queer chap, this Chester. I don't know what to make of him.'

'Reuben,' said Nancy, 'I want you to do something, and as soon as ever you can—this very morning, please.'

'Well, little Nan, I'll do it for sure, if I can.'

'It's easy enough: just tell John all you told us last night.'

'About me and us; do you mean that?'

'Yes, please.'

'Bless your little heart! I understand.'

Reuben stooped over the girl and kissed her on the cheek. It was a calm sort of kiss, nor did it bring the colour to Nancy's cheeks.

When Reuben reached the quarries and reported himself at the office, he was at once shown to a part of the pit where three men were working. One of the three was John Chester, and he was working like a fiend. The ladders here were hung in some very ticklish places. For about twenty yards a parallel pair of them overhung the water, there some five hundred feet below.

John Chester looked up when he heard Reuben's voice. He called to one of his mates to act the part of mentor. 'I'll come up to you directly,' he cried, and went on splitting the rock like a madman.

He worked on and on for two hours without ceasing.

'Whatever's the matter with Chester?' asked one of the others: 'I never saw such a fellow as he is this morning.'

'Isn't he always like this?' John heard Reuben demand; and then he heard the laugh that greeted the reply which he did not hear.

Shortly afterwards, he threw down his pick. 'I'm going down the Duke's Nose,' he said to his mate.

They called this precipitous outward and then inward dip of the rock the Duke's Nose because of its resemblance to the Duke of Wellington's well-known proboscis.

He took a strong pair of pinchers with him, and, having reached a place where he fancied himself unobserved, deftly loosened the fasteners which held one of the ladders to the rock. Then he reascended, and for the first time joined Reuben. 'Aren't you tired?' he asked.

'Well,' said Reuben, 'I must say I am—there's no denying it.'

'Knock off for a bit. I want to show you what a fine place the Penlyn pit is. There ain't another like it anywhere.'

Willingly enough, Reuben put down his pick and pulled on his coat. They descended together, John Chester leading, until they came to the perpendicular part where the ladder bifurcated. Here Reuben Tallack hesitated, while the other stepped on to the second ladder of the two.

'I say, Chester, this is a bad-looking spot and no mistake,' observed Reuben.

'Are you afraid?'

'Afraid? Well, I don't know that. But I'm going to marry a dear little girl in a week or two, and'

'Any one can see you're a coward,' said Chester with dreadful hardness.

The other looked down at his companion curiously. 'You've no right to say that to me.'

'I say it all the same. I don't believe you dare come on where I'm going.'

Reuben was just about to set his feet on the unsafe ladder, when he restrained himself. 'Look here, Chester,' he said. 'I don't know what to make of you. Still, I've a notion you're not such a bad fellow as you've been trying to make yourself out. I'm not a coward; but it's always possible a fellow may miss his footing and go to the next world in a moment. If that happens to me, will you promise to break it gently to my little Cornish girl? She'll be in Nantle next week? Will you promise?'

John Chester stared for reply.

'Well, you won't? Then I'm coming and chance it.'

Reuben was already lowering his feet, when John Chester cried in a voice of thunder: 'Keep off it—for the love of God. Get back.'

Almost simultaneously he sprang from his ladder to the lowest rungs of the ladder above the injured one. Then grasping the bars beneath Reuben's body, and with his feet lightly resting on the ladder that was to have hurled his fancied rival to the bottom of the pit, he effectually blocked the way.

'I want to speak to you,' he cried. 'Will you climb up a bit?'

Reuben did so. They came to a level space, where they both left the ladder.

'Now, then, tell me,' said John Chester, 'did I understand you to say you're not going to marry Nancy Griffiths?'

'Certainly you did.'

John Chester went pale as snow. 'My God!' he muttered.

'I don't suppose it's news to you,' observed Reuben, 'that little Nan's lost her heart to you.'

'Lost her heart to me?'

'As true as I stand here, that's so.—You're a queer fellow, Chester.'

'A queer fellow! I'm a villain—that's what I am. Come down the ladder again—please.'

Then John Chester showed the pitfall he had prepared for the other, confessed the reason of it, and said he would take the consequences of his crime, whatever they might be.

But Reuben merely laid his hand upon Chester's shoulder. 'I don't blame you,' he said quietly.

'We'll forget it, Chester, you and me, in time. There's no one else on earth whom it concerns.'

'Yes, there's Nancy. She'd never marry such a villain as me.—Oh, what a fearful thing this jealousy is!'

'You think she would not? Well, ask her, Chester.'

Nancy did not desert John Chester, though nothing of his tragic intention was withheld from her. It was, at any rate, a dreadful proof of his

love for her; and when she looked into her heart after the confession, she found that she loved him no less than before, and pity was added to her love.

PRONOUNCING NAMES.

ENGLISHMEN are wont to demur at the inveterate habit of their Welsh neighbours of filling up Proper Names with legions of unnecessary consonants, thereby rendering the pronunciation of the same practically a feat of impossibility to any but a native of Cambria. However, after all that is said and done, Welshmen might retort with a certain degree of reason and justice by denouncing the way in which Englishmen of all classes deliberately sound many of their own names quite differently from the way in which they spell them; and this perversion of ordinary rules applies equally to the pronunciation of both places and persons. This custom has in the majority of cases arisen either through the medium of local dialects, or else through a not unnatural desire for abbreviation. Of course, in the names of county families, several cases are well known, such as Levison being sounded as if spelt 'Luson'; Wymondham, 'Wyndham'; Cholmondeley, 'Chumley'; Pennycomequick, 'Pennychuke'; Dumaresq, 'Dumerriek'; and Majoribanks, 'Marchbanks.'

However, it is not so much in family names, such as the foregoing, in which we delight to confuse foreigners, as in the names of towns and villages; besides, these family names indulging in conjuring tricks are comparatively few in number, and everybody is supposed to be acquainted with their little weaknesses. Yet we who laugh at these apparent affectations in others, are nothing loth to commit the same crimes ourselves and to boldly pronounce names of familiar places in a way that is totally at variance with the spelling. To say 'libel' instead of label, or 'stroick' instead of strike, would be to acknowledge ourselves to be of Cockney origin; nevertheless, all the world over, Thames becomes 'Tems.' We sound Greenwich as if it were spelt 'Grinige'; whilst Woolwich correspondingly becomes 'Woolige'; and then we pride ourselves upon speaking the Queen's English correctly; although, perhaps, we really do speak grammatically, even in the face of these apparent blunders, for what is grammar but the official recognition of custom with regard to speech? Yet in all this we give strong grounds for disciples of phonography to base their arguments upon.

There are numerous examples of this habit of mispronunciation to be encountered throughout the country, it being by no means indigenous to the metropolitan area. It is doubtless to save time and trouble that Cirencester is abbreviated into 'Cicester'; Willesden into 'Willsden'; Sydenham into 'Sydnam'; and Woolfardisworthy into 'Woolfery.' Brighthelmstone is a thing of the past, for when that little Sussex village expanded itself into the dimensions and dignity of a town, it equalised matters by contracting its name into 'Brighton.' But even when we meet with a short and seemingly simple name like Derby we must needs sound the 'e' as if it were an 'a,' and say

'Darby'; nor is the reason apparent why the county of Shropshire should be sometimes converted into 'Salop,' nor Barnstaple into 'Barum.' For brevity's sake we write 'Wilts,' 'Yorks,' and 'Berks' instead of Wiltshire, Yorkshire, and Berkshire—which last named, by the way, following the before-mentioned lead of Derby, metamorphoses itself into 'Barkshire,' a fact which *Punch* wittily makes use of by referring to it as being the Parliamentary constituency of Toby, M.P. In a similar manner 'Harford' or 'Hartford' represents Hertford. Salisbury is pronounced 'Saulsberry'; and that favourite termination for the name of a town, Burgh, is sounded as if written 'Burror,' thus expanding the word by a more inexplicable process than that by which Jack Tar calls a helm a 'hellum.'

Badgeworthy Water, a Devonshire stream figuring somewhat prominently in Mr Blackmore's romance *Lorna Doone*, is locally called 'Badgery Water'; whilst in the neighbouring county of Somerset, an obscure little village with the rather ambiguous title of Bathelton is invariably known as 'Battleton'; and Newport (Isle of Wight) becomes 'Nippot' in the language of Wessex.

Such changes are not altogether surprising in localities where traditional names are entrusted to the keeping of a semi-educated or ignorant peasantry; but surely we are entitled to expect more care and consideration in the great centres of learning? However, as a matter of fact we are disappointed in this respect, even in our Universities—at least as regards the names of colleges—for at Oxford we have Magdalen pronounced 'Maudlin'; whilst at Cambridge, Caius becomes 'Keys.'

SONG OF AN OLD MAID.

WHAT can I offer you, oh my love,
After these lonely years—
Lips that have lost their sweetness,
Eyes that are heavy with tears?
A heart that is bitter and cold,
And overshadowed with fears?—
I have nought to offer you, oh my love,
After these lonely years.

Oh Lips so white! be red for my love,
And smile as in olden days!
Oh Heart of ice! melt for him now,
In the light of the sunshine rays!
My lips shall sing and my heart shall ring
With the joy of my tender lays—
And you, oh my love, will kiss and caress,
As you did in the olden days.

No; it is over: it is too late
To dream the old dream again.
I am weary of life with its fretful cares—
I am tired of the heart-breaking pain.
Is there no remedy? Is there no rest,
No fleeing from ills that remain?
No! It is late—It is years too late
To dream the old dream again.

MAUD PHILP.

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THE LAND OF THE CHAIN-MAKERS.

In the old days, Cradley, in Worcestershire, must have been a pretty place. The country round it is a confusing mixture of abrupt hills with humpy summits and deep dells, connected with each other by brooks that are not pellucid. But for the most part the hills are now quite shorn of the woods which clad them, and cramped villages—or rather little towns—of stunted red-brick houses are set about them: at their bases in the valleys, on their slopes, and even on their breezy tops. The landscape is such as you will hardly match anywhere in England.

Broad and generally very miry roads join the different villages, and the traffic on these roads is astonishing. Big drays laden with chain-gear, and little homely carts of the coster type, drawn by meagre panting horses, and also freighted with chains, at once indicate the local industry. It is a land of chains. The continuous hammering on all sides tells of their making; and the grimy faces and set expressions of the men and women, old and young, tell further of the hardships attendant upon their making. It is not an ideal kind of work, by any means. The phrase 'the poor chain-makers' has become quite stereotyped. If these poor chain-makers are half as wretched as the newspaper reviewers periodically prove them to be, it is a marvel that they continue in these valleys of their nativity. The bolder and more thrifty of them no doubt vanish to America and other countries of promise. But the majority exist as best they may. Early in life they give considerable hostage to fortune in the shape of large families, so that it is not easy for them to shake off their inherited fetters or turn to 'new pastures.' Yet even for them existence is not wholly painful. They have an infinite number of low-browed public-houses; they fly pigeons; indulge in social intercourse on the high-road on Sundays and Mondays; and make periodical raids into the neighbouring rural districts, attended by discreet mongrels—a cross between a greyhound and a fox-terrier—

who are said to be 'death on rabbits.' The gamekeepers for miles round know these liver and white lurchers, and would like them and their owners to be exterminated.

Nothing is easier than to get a glimpse of the chain-makers of the district. You may see them in the large manufactories, where they are simply paid employees addicted to strikes, or you may see them in their own domestic workshops. There is more picturesqueness about the latter; and you may therefore be advised to peer through the windows of the first little red-brick outhouse—some fifteen feet by ten—the hammering in which excites your curiosity as you pass it. Five or six individuals are within, each with a little pocket forge to himself or herself; and there is no doubt about their zeal. The litter of bright new links on the floor tells of their labours; and while you watch them, they finish new links and add these to the rest. It is a warm place, as you may imagine, for each forge has its bellows, and the glow is constant. The hand-hammers are two or three pounds in weight; but the driver-hammer, which is also used—by pedal action—weighs five to ten times as much. All things considered, and assuming that women must do this kind of work in default of other employment, one cannot wonder that they are so bare about the shoulders and breast. They do not earn more than four to six shillings a week on the average, and there is much immorality in the district.

Often, however, in justice to the chain-maker, it must be said that the five or six operatives in the shed are the sons and daughters of the master. Happy is the chain-maker who has his quiverful of healthy and unambitious children! He may put by much money (comparatively) during the years which intervene between the time when they first take up the hammer and their marriage, with subsequent larger aspirations which sadly unfit them for the paternal workshop. But as a rule it is a hand-to-mouth business. The poor chain-maker rises early, and the sound of his hammer may be heard for about twelve hours out of the twenty-four. He does not grumble

inordinately about his fate. From time immemorial he has been a steadfast believer in the comforts of religion, and he gets much solace for his week-day toils in the ugly red-brick Bethel or local New Connection or Zion which he frequents on the Sunday. Hardly anywhere in England is the Old Testament more esteemed than here, by the more respectable workers. It is the source whence the chain-maker gets names for his sons and daughters. A man is Noah, or Cain, Abel, Adam, Seth, Job, Jabez, Ezra, Jacob, Judah, Eli, Hezekiah, or Nehemiah. For females the choice is less extensive; but you will find Delilahs and Zillahs here, as well as Eves, Hannahs, and innumerable Mary Janes. It is also the source of his immortal hopes. He is not a very shrewd theologian or logician; but once he takes an opinion or a notion into his mind, he cherishes it hard into a prejudice or a superstition. There are men here with a surprising gift of rude eloquence, and when excited to reprove an erring fellow-creature, their denunciations, after the manner of the Biblical prophets, are not to be listened to unmoved. I talked the other day with one such man as he rested his hammer on the forge. He soon turned the conversation into a Scriptural channel. 'I wur thinking,' he said, 'only this morning as I lay in my bed about them words o' the Bible which says Our Lord He sweated drops o' blood. That's an awful thing, master, to think on. How he must ha' suffered!' He glanced carelessly at his muscular arms, moist with perspiration from his own work, and I marked the beads of perspiration on his brow.

The younger chain-makers do not seem to be of this type. They have been born in a different season. They do not show the difference so much when they are at their forges, except in their evil habit of swearing. But on off-days and the Sabbath there is no mistaking them. At such times they crush into the public-houses or sit on the walls of slag by the roadside, discussing either the winner of the Derby, the relative merits of two or three pigeons, or the eccentric appearance of the passer-by. In good sooth, they themselves are eccentric enough in their slovenly black, with their caps drawn to their eyes, and short clay pipes in their mouths; and the faithful dogs at their feet are as odd to see as they are.

I wish it were possible to say that the women of the district have some strong distinctive attraction for the stranger. But how should they have? Their freshness passes long ere they have passed their teens. Association in such work as theirs with such men as these, soon wears off their bloom. They marry, and have children, before they ought; and at forty look as if they bore or had borne the cares of a universe. As one sees them in the streets or at their house-doors, they are a slatternly, hard-featured race; and their children are quite as slatternly, and even more dirty than they are. Their speech, too, savours of the impolite, not to say the blasphemous. It is an affair of association. If they lived in a village of bishops, doubtless they would use episcopal adjectives. As it is, they live among overworked and discontented chain-makers, who do not pick and choose their words from the dictionary. The novelist with an itch to create a winsome heroine in this locality must have a good store of fancy, and deal mercifully with her inevitable surroundings; or else

he must hedge her round closely with old-fashioned relatives of the kind I have already hinted at.

Yet there is a lingering suggestion of romance in this much-despoiled manufacturing district. You come to a forlorn little triangular space of ground studded with clothes-lines and refuse-heaps, and hedged on two sides by wretched tenements of the usual kind, and perceive that the spot is called 'Sweet Turf.' No name could befit it less; yet there it is. 'Sweet Mouse' is the designation of another spot somewhat like this. Again, there is 'Primrose Hill,' a thoroughfare echoing with the riot of hammers, and the houses in the vicinity of which stand as far from the perpendicular as they can.

It is really quite pathetic to see the state of some of these dwellings in the hollows. They have been propped, but all in vain. A sudden 'crowning in,' as it is called, has jeopardised the lives of the inmates, and at length made the houses uninhabitable. They are at all angles up to half a right angle. If you enter them, you feel as you feel in ascending the Leaning Tower of Pisa. With some the ruin is complete. A wall has fallen outwards and the roof inwards. This dilapidation and the inebriate attitudes of the other houses remind one of a place wrecked by earthquake. Casamicciola, in Ischia, is, on a larger scale, much like some of these suburbs of the chain-makers' metropolis. One house of a specially mournful appearance may be seen. Anciently, it was an attractive villa, white, with five windows in front, an assuming portal, and with fruit-trees and a lawn. Now it leans heavily forwards, and has three great beams supporting it. Nor is this all. The property is surrounded by a wall, which on its part has ten or twelve props to keep it from yielding to its inclination to fall inwardly towards the house. This house is to let.

Another common red-brick tenement deserves to be mentioned. It illustrates the sense of religiosity which strives with fair success against the loose tendencies of the younger generation of chain-makers. It is in the heart of Cradley, and no way noticeable except for its name—'Provide against your enemies.' The date 1875 is quite against an assumption that it hails from the time of Cromwell.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XX.—LOVE AFFAIRS, AND STARTLING NEWS.

DAYS and weeks passed while Isabel was enduring her probation of trial with her father. She had thought it well to ignore his first escapade. She conversed with him and discussed with him, she cheered and sustained him, as if the painful evening with Uncle Harry and the day following had never been. And her father (for a time) showed his gratitude in his own way: he was soothed and encouraged, and he set himself with alacrity to plan assiduous occupation for his pen. And he really did accomplish some

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work which Ainsworth brought him to do from the office of *The Evening Banner*. But the slightest additional touch of excitement would send him off to the opium den, whence he would be brought back by Doughty or Ainsworth, or both, in shame and despair. Isabel bore patiently with these sudden declensions, recognising that it was not to be expected that her father could recover a firm footing in life except gradually. She forbore to reproach him; she still surrounded him with all her love; and he was passionately grateful, and became more and more cheerful and settled. When his craving was absent, the days passed pleasantly, with some amount of performance and a great deal of promise, and with much delightful talk, in which Ainsworth joined—and sometimes Doughty—about books and authors, plays and players, and the interests of the world at large. One special flash of delight Isabel had at that time which affected her happily for many days: she received a gentle, kindly letter from Uncle Harry, admitting he had behaved ill, and hoping that pleasant relations would be resumed on his return.

The days were become hot and long, and in the cool of the evening they frequently walked into Regent's Park. The vacation-taking world was beginning to think with longing of the plangent margin of the cool sea-shore, of the green of fields and forests, and of the breeze and bloom of mountain and moor—even Isabel was looking forward to a holiday with her father when the month was run out—but Ainsworth had no change of that kind in prospect. He was just beginning to 'find his feet' in London, and to 'know his way about'—two excellent and expressive phrases—and he must continue without present hope of intermission to beat the hot pavements of the Strand and Fleet Street; for it would be a thing unheard of that a journalist so new to his task should so much as desire a vacation for two or three years. Ainsworth, therefore, when once he had been in the park, affected to make much of its fresh air, the shade of its trees, and the coolness and sparkle of its ornamental waters. When he looked in of an evening, he became increasingly urgent that they should seek these delights, and as often as possible solicitous that Doughty should be of the company.

The deep design of these expeditions of three or, by preference, four, if dimly perceived, might never have been openly expressed had it not been for Euphemia Suffield. That young lady, finding that she saw less than she had been wont of her dear cousin Isabel, and hearing that her cousin was now much engrossed with her newly-found father, came more than once to the Marylebone lodgings, encouraged thereto by the kindly Suffield himself. She had also another reason for calling on her cousin—a particularly family and feminine reason: she had never heard any but the most discreetly veiled allusions to Isabel's father; she had always believed he must be a very wicked man, and now she was exceedingly curious to see with her own bright eyes and to hear with her own shrewd ears what manner of man he really was.

Mrs Suffield had well said to Isabel that her

father had 'a way with women.' His manner was to all gentle and suave; but when he addressed a woman his voice unconsciously slipped into a softer, deeper tone than usual, as if he were anxious for her sympathy; and in whatever company he was, the entrance of a woman would always provoke an evident gush of emotion. So bright and pretty a girl as Euphemia—and his own relation too—was not the least likely to call forth these characteristics in him. He let his eyes dwell on her with the tenderest interest and approval; he praised her dresses; he listened with delight to her prattle; he recited soft, musical verses to her; and he talked to her very wisely, but not to weariness, of serious matters of Life and Love. The inevitable result was that Euphemia considered him charming beyond any charm she had ever believed possible in man.

'Oh, Bell!' she exclaimed to her cousin, 'why haven't we known Uncle John before?'

'Do you like him?' asked Isabel, with simple pleasure.

'Like him!' exclaimed Euphemia. 'I should think I do! He is a dear! Why can't all men be like him? Oh, wouldn't it be delightful to have him make love to you! And so clever as he is too! If he were a little younger, I am sure I should fall in love with him! Indeed, I think I am in love with him as it is!'

Isabel smiled: it pleased her immensely to hear her father praised even by so irresponsible a rhapsodist as her cousin. And, since Uncle John was her uncle, and since it was beyond the wildest dreams of possibility that he should ever be anything else, Euphemia did not scruple to praise him openly, and to confide to him in secret two things which the most gushing and rhapsodical of girls would instinctively shrink from doing with most men, however charming and however elderly; for the most charming and elderly man may suddenly assume the guise of a lover. Isabel was surprised on one or two occasions when she returned from school to hear that Euphemia had called and had had a long talk with her father, the purport of which he was close about, saying that she had 'gossiped a little.'

'But not even a girl,' laughed Isabel, 'would take two hours to "gossip a little," father: she must have gossiped a good deal.'

'Yes,' said Mr Raynor; 'she gossiped a good deal.'

'But I must tell her,' said Isabel, slyly, 'she must not come and occupy two of your best hours with frivolous gossip—hours which you wish to devote to hard work. Of course, Phemy has no idea that anybody should want to be busier than she is herself.'

'Oh no, my dear!' exclaimed Mr Raynor, in alarm. 'I beg you will not do that. I find her gossip very charming and improving. Women, my dear, are, and always have been, to me a never-failing well-spring of joy. They appear so complex, and they are so simple, and so good—so good!' and a moistness came upon his eye, and a softness into his voice. 'Men are seldom so good as they seem; women are always better. They are wonderful creatures! You remember Coleridge's pleasant way of putting it: "Man seems to have been designed for the superior being of the two; but, as things are, I think

women are generally better creatures than men."—By the way, have you ever met Lord Clitheroe at your uncle's?"

'Once,' answered Isabel; 'yes, twice.' And she said within herself: 'So *he* was the subject of the long gossip!'

'What do you think of him?' asked her father simply.

'His person, or his mind, father?'

'Both, my dear. They are properly inseparable.'

'He is a tall young man, with a big red beard and a bald head, which makes his forehead look roomier than it probably is; and he always wears gloves, because, I believe, his hands are amazingly hairy.'

'If he's ashamed of his hair,' said her father, 'why doesn't he shave?'

'What? His hands?'

'No, no, my dear; his beard.'

'I have not talked much with him, father, and I can't say. But I should guess that, though he has what is called a "carelessly aristocratic" air, he is very sensitive about his personal appearance.'

'Does he give himself any airs of superiority?'

'No,' she answered; 'I don't think he does. He looks rather solemn and heavy; but I believe he is more interested in Phemy than he understands, and that she is more attracted to him than she thinks.'

'Oh, you think so, do you?' said her father with a smile. 'Well, he appears on the whole to be a very good fellow.'

When Isabel next saw Euphemia, she sprang the question upon her: 'Why haven't you told me anything about Lord Clitheroe?'

'Oh!' exclaimed Euphemia with a charming blush. 'That means your father has told you! I shall never trust Uncle John with a secret again.'

'No, my dear,' said Isabel; 'it means nothing of the sort. It only means that a woman can pick a secret out of a man, as you can pick a feather out of a feather-bed.'

'Well, I might say to you,' retorted Euphemia, 'why haven't you told me anything about Alan Ainsworth?'

'About Alan Ainsworth!' exclaimed Isabel, now blushing in her turn—but a deeper red than her cousin.—'I have nothing to tell! We are very good friends, as you know, and he comes often and has talks with my father.'

'Well!' exclaimed the triumphant Euphemia, 'he is here every evening.'

'Oh no. Not nearly every evening,' protested Isabel.

'As many evenings as he can spare,' maintained Euphemia. 'What does that mean, my dear? And he takes you for evening walks in the park!—to enjoy a talk with Uncle John? Not he! He does his very best always to get that funny, solemn Mr Doughty out, so that he may have you all to himself; while my uncle and that poor Mr Doughty—who adores you—are interested in the silly little quack-quacks!'

'Yes,' said Isabel meditatively, 'I suppose he does. But did my father tell you all that?'

'No, my dear,' answered Euphemia, with a mischievous wriggle; 'that was not necessary:

a woman can pick a secret out of a man, as you can pick a feather out of a feather-bed.'

At that, of course, they both laughed.

'Really, Phemy,' said Isabel, 'I did not think you were such a very clever child. But tell me all about Lord Clitheroe.'

'Tell me all about Mr Ainsworth,' retorted Euphemia.

'Truly, my dear,' said Isabel, 'I have nothing to tell.'

Euphemia wagged her head in disbelief. 'Well,' said she, 'I have little to tell about Lord Clitheroe; but I'll tell you the little I have. I'll be honest than you, Bell: you always could be close if you wanted to. Oh, he is a dear droll man! And I believe he is very fond of me.'

'But are you fond of him?' asked Isabel.

'Oh, I like him very well—though I think it's a pity he's so hairy. I tell him we are Beauty and the Beast, and he doesn't seem to mind; so that makes it all right.'

'Oh,' exclaimed Isabel, 'you have become so familiar as that, have you?'

'I don't know what you mean by familiar—but certainly we are like that. There was quite a family Parliament about it the other day, I believe. His mother, Lady Padiham, called one day in a great yellow chariot, that has double steps to let down for you to get in and out; and really, Bell, my mother looked the greater lady of the two: she looked grander and she behaved grander, till, you know, if we had played our school-game with them—"nievey-nievey, nick-nack"—you'd have chosen my mother for the Countess, and the Countess for the cotton-spinner's wife. She's an ugly, raw-boned Scotch-woman—and I don't care who hears me—a daughter of the old Earl of Pitsligo.'

'You don't seem, Phemy,' said Isabel with a smile, 'to love and honour your future mother-in-law.'

'I have told you, Bell, my dear,' said Euphemia, 'that there is nothing settled. Parliament is considering it—I mean the family Parliament. Clitheroe will bring in a Bill proposing to make me his wife—I believe that's what they do—isn't it?—it will be read a First, Second, and Third time; and I suppose Clitheroe will come again, or will not come, according to the final decision of Parliament.'

'You seem fairly indifferent,' said Isabel.

'Yes; I am and I'm not. Clitheroe is a dear, kind man, as I've told you, and I believe he's very fond of me, though I wish he were cleverer and I liked him more; but I should dearly love to be Lady Clitheroe and then Countess of Padiham.'

'But, Phemy dear,' said Isabel seriously, 'surely it is a dreadful, monstrous thing to think of marrying a man when you are not very much in love with him—when you are not sure he is the one man you could spend your life with!'

'Are you sure of that, Bell dear?'

'I'm not thinking of marrying, Phemy,' replied Isabel.

'Well,' said Phemy, 'please don't talk like that to me—not now, at least. Your father has given me wagon-loads of good advice of that sort, which I do not see my way to make any use of. But

Uncle John is the dearest, cleverest, best-spoken man in the world, and I love him very much.'

Later, Isabel was talking with her father of this conversation, and discussing what seemed to her the strange fact that Euphemia insisted more on Lord Clitheroe's fondness for her than on any fondness she had for him, when her father answered her in words that sank into her mind.

'Surely,' said he, 'it is not strange; it is the commonest way women have of regarding men. You remember the words of a wise man: "The man's desire is for the woman; but the woman's desire is seldom other than for the desire of the man."'

Isabel revolted against that wise saying, and, if so be she had intended to speak of Ainsworth to her father, she now did not. But from that day she modified the walks in Regent's Park—she was studious that her father should not be left so much to himself or to Mr Doughty, and that she herself should not be so much engrossed with Mr Ainsworth and his conversation—not because she did not like the former mode, nor because she thought it wrong, but merely for a sidelong reason—a touch of contrariness, which as a clever woman she was open to—because she did not like a flighty little thing like Euphemia to have perceived what she had not been fully aware of. Moreover, she thought with an inward blush: 'It is possible that Mr Ainsworth has been quite conscious, and has thought that I also was conscious, that we kept apart from the others;' and she thought again, with a deeper blush: 'Can I have done anything to cause that impression?—and can I appear to have been forward?'

It was unavoidable that, with these feelings and doubts jangling in her, Isabel should seem more self-conscious in Ainsworth's presence than she had been wont, and that Ainsworth, perceiving that, should become more self-conscious too. The thermometer of his feeling then began to rise and fall, and rise again at a mad rate: 'She loves me! She loves me not! She loves me!' At one time he was on the heights of joy; at another, in the depths of despair. And Isabel did not help to steady him; for she herself was as uncertain as he. Which may seem somewhat odd. For a man, being commonly a dull, thick-witted creature compared with a woman, seldom recognises when a woman is in love with him; but a woman seldom misses to recognise when a man is in love with her: she fails to recognise it only when she herself is in love with the man, for then her feeling rises and clouds her clear perceptions. Now that was Isabel's condition. She was in love with Ainsworth, though she hardly knew it; and therefore she remained very much in darkness and doubt concerning the kind of regard that Ainsworth had for her. All which refinements are riddles to those who have never been in love.

Uncertainty of that kind was fast becoming unendurable to Ainsworth. Once and again he was on the point of putting his fate 'to the touch, to win or lose it all,' but he was debarred by one or two considerations. He was a notably impulsive person, but yet he had a considerable leaven of reserve and forethought in his composition. 'I love her! Let everything yield to that!'

prompted impulse. 'But,' suggested forethought, 'is it fair to ask a beautiful, noble girl like her to share your lot until it is better established? And is it quite fair and honourable to try to snatch a victory over young George Sufield, while she may be still in doubt whether she loves him or no?' In spite of all that, it is extremely probable that impulse would have won the day—with a man like Ainsworth it usually does, when it comes to protracted debate—had it not been that something happened very soon to turn aside for a time the current of emotion.

It was towards the end of July—so near the end that the holidays were within hail, and Isabel had already arranged where she was to spend them with her father. It had been an unbearably hot week throughout the country, so hot that many cases of sunstroke were reported in the newspapers; labourers in the field and soldiers who had felt the sun of India had been struck down; and all the world of London was panting in the lightest of raiment, and with doors and windows flung wide open. On a certain afternoon, just when Isabel had returned from school, a cab rattled up to the gate, and Euphemia ran in with a scared face.

'Father,' said she, 'has sent me on with that. He couldn't come himself. He is going off by the first train he can catch.' And, after an instant's doubt between Isabel and her father, she handed to Isabel a telegram.

The telegram, which Isabel opened with trembling fingers and the wildest, vaguest fears, was dated from 'Llanberis, North Wales,' and ran thus: 'To SUFFIELD, M.P., Rutland Gate, London.—Mr Raynor sunstroke Snowdon. Lying now at the Gwydyr, Llanberis. Doctor says no hope. Come at once.—DANIEL.'

THE NEW CUNARDERS.

FORTY-TWO years ago the Eastern Steam Navigation Company having failed to obtain the contract to carry the mails from Plymouth to India and Australia—in vessels of from twelve hundred to two thousand tons, with engines of from four to six hundred horse-power, which were never built—began to consider a new enterprise, suggested by the late Isambard K. Brunel. This was to build the largest steamer ever yet constructed, to trade with India round the Cape of Good Hope. The general commercial idea was, that this leviathan vessel was to carry leviathan cargoes at large freights and great speed, to Ceylon, where the goods and passengers would be rapidly transhipped to smaller swift steamers for conveyance to various destinations in India, China, and Australia. The general mechanical idea was, that in order to obtain great velocity in steamers it was only necessary to make them large—that, in fact, there need be no limit to the size of a vessel beyond what might be imposed by the tenacity of material. On what was called the tubular principle, Brunel argued—and proved to the satisfaction of numerous experts and capitalists—that it was possible to construct a vessel of six times the capacity of the largest vessel then afloat that would steam at a speed unattainable by smaller vessels, while carrying,

besides cargo, all the coal she would require for the longest voyage.

Thus originated the 'Great Eastern,' which never went to India, which ruined two or three companies in succession, which cost £120,000 to launch, which probably earned more as a show than ever she did as an ocean-carrier—except in the matter of telegraph cables—and which ignobly ended a disastrous career only a year or so ago.

We are now entering upon a new era of big ships, in which such a monster as the 'Great Eastern' would be no longer a wonder. The two latest additions to the Cunard fleet, the 'Campania' and 'Lucania,' are within a trifle as large as she, but with infinitely more powerful engines and incomparably greater speed.

Do not let us suppose, however, that the idea of big ocean-steamers has been the monopoly of this country. So long ago as 1850 or thereabouts, Mr Randall, a famous American ship-builder, designed, drafted, and constructed the model of a steamer for transatlantic service, 500 feet long by 58 feet beam, to measure 8000 tons. A company was formed in Philadelphia in 1860 to carry out the project; but the Civil War broke out soon after, and she was never built.

The 'Great Eastern' was launched in January 1858, and her principal dimensions were these: length between perpendiculars, 680 feet; breadth of beam, 83 feet; length of principal saloons, 400 feet; tonnage capacity for cargo and coals, 18,000 tons; weight of ship as launched, 12,000 tons; accommodation for passengers (1) 800, (2) 2000, (3) 1200=4000; total horse-power, 7650. She had both screw and paddles for propulsion, and her displacement was 32,160 tons.

By this time the Cunard Company had been eighteen years in existence. They started in 1840 with the 'Britannia'—quickly followed by the 'Acadia,' 'Columbia,' and 'Caledonia,' all more or less alike—which was a paddle-steamer of wood, 207 feet long, 34 feet broad, 22 feet deep, and of 1156 tons, with side-lever engines developing 740 indicated horse-power, which propelled the vessel at the average speed of nine knots an hour. There was accommodation for 225 tons of cargo, and 115 cabin passengers—no steerage in those days—who paid thirty-four guineas to Halifax and thirty-eight guineas to Boston, for passage, including provisions and wine.

At the time of the 'Great Eastern' the latest type of Cunarder was the 'Persia,' and it is interesting to note the development in the interim. This vessel was 380 feet long, 45 feet broad, 31 feet deep, of 3870 tons, with engines developing 4000 indicated horse-power, propelling at the rate of thirteen and a half knots an hour. The 'Persia' and the 'Scotia,' sister-ships, were the last of the Atlantic side-wheelers. In 1862 the first screw-steamer was added to the Cunard fleet. This was the 'China,' built by the Napiers of Glasgow, 326 feet long by 40½ feet broad, and 27½ feet deep, of 2600 tons, and with an average speed of about twelve knots.

Such was the type of Cunarder in the early days of the 'Great Eastern,' whose dimensions have now been nearly reached. The 'Campania,' however, has not been built with a view to out-

shine that huge failure, but is the outcome of a wholly different competition. The 'Campania' and the 'Lucania' represent the highest development of marine architecture and engineering skill at the present time, and are the product of long years of rivalry for the possession of the 'blue-ribbon' of the transatlantic race.

The competition is of ancient date, if we go back to the days when the American 'Collins' Company tried to run the Cunard Company off the waters; and during the half-century since the inauguration of steam-service the Cunard Company have sometimes held and sometimes lost the highest place for speed. The period of steam-racing—the age of 'Atlantic greyhounds'—may be said to have begun in the year 1879, when the Cunard 'Gallia,' the Guion 'Arizona,' and the White Star 'Britannic' and 'Germanic' had all entered upon their famous careers. It is matter of history now how the 'Arizona'—called the 'Fairfield Flyer,' because she was built by Messrs John Elder & Company of Fairfield, Glasgow—beat the record in an eastward run of seven days twelve and a half hours, and a westward run of seven days ten and three-quarters hours. To beat the 'Arizona,' the Cunard Company built the 'Servia,' of 8500 tons and 10,300 horse-power; but she in turn was beaten by another Fairfield Flyer, the 'Alaska,' under the Guion flag. The race continued year by year, as vessels of increasing size and power were entered by the competing companies. While all the lines compete in swift, saved luxury, and efficiency, the keenest rivalry is our between the Cunard and the White Star Companies. And just as the 'Campania' and 'Lucania' have been built to eclipse the renowned 'Teutonic' and 'Majestic,' so the owners of these boats are preparing—it is said—to surpass even the two latest Cunarders which are to make the present year of grace memorable in the history of merchant shipping.

Let us now see something of these marvels of marine architecture. They are sister-ships, both built on the Clyde by the Fairfield Ship-building and Engineering Company, and both laid down almost simultaneously. They are almost identical in dimensions and appointments, and therefore we may confine our description to the 'Campania,' which is the first of the twins to be ready for sea.

This largest vessel afloat does not mark any new departure in general type, as the 'Great Eastern' did in differing from all types of construction then familiar. In outward appearance, the 'Campania' as she lies upon the water, and as seen at a sufficient distance, is just like numbers of other vessels we have all seen. Nor does her immense size at first impress the observer, because of the beautiful proportions on which she is planned. Her lines are eminently what the nautical enthusiast calls 'sweet,' and in her own class of naval art she is as perfect a specimen of architectural beauty as the finest of the grand old clippers which used to 'walk the waters as a thing of life.' The colossal size of St Peter's at Rome does not strike you as you enter, because of the exquisite proportions. And so with the 'Campania'—you need to see an ordinary 'tramp,' or even a full-blown liner, alongside before you can realise how vast she is.

Yet she is only 60 feet shorter than the

mammoth 'Great Eastern,' and measures 620 feet in length, 65 feet 3 inches in breadth, and 43 feet in depth from the upper deck. Her tonnage is 12,000, while that of the 'Great Eastern' was 18,000; but then her horse-power is 30,000 as against the 'Great Eastern's' 7650!

This enormous development of engine-power is perhaps the most remarkable feature about these two new vessels. Each of them is fitted with two sets of the most powerful triple-expansion engines ever put together. A visit to the engine-room is a liberal education in the mechanical arts, and even to the eye of the uninitiated there is the predominant impression of perfect order in the bewildering arrangement of pipes, rods, cranks, levers, wheels, and cylinders. The two sets of engines are placed in two separate rooms on each side of a centre-line bulkhead fitted with water-tight doors for intercommunication. Each set has five inverted cylinders which have exactly the same stroke, and work on three cranks. Two of the cylinders are high-pressure, one is intermediate, and two are low-pressure. Besides the main engines, there are engines for reversing, for driving the centrifugal pumps for the condensers, for the electric light, for the refrigerating chambers, and for a number of other purposes—all perfect in appointment and finish. In fact, in these vast engine-rooms one is best able to realise not only the immense size and power of the vessel, but also the perfection to which human ingenuity has attained after generations of ceaseless toil—and yet it is only half a century since the 'Britannia' began the transatlantic race.

Each of the various engines has its own steam-supplier. The main engines are fed by twelve double-ended boilers, arranged in rows of six on each side of a water-tight bulkhead. The boilers are heated by ninety-six furnaces, and each set of six boilers has a funnel with the diameter of an ordinary railway tunnel. In the construction of these boilers some eight hundred tons of steel were required, the plates weighing four tons each, with a thickness of an inch and a half. From these mighty machines will be developed a power equal to that of 30,000 horses! Compare this with the 'Great Eastern's' 7650 horse-power, or even with the later 'greyhounds.' The greatest power developed by any single-screw engines. The 'City of Paris' has a power of 18,500, and the 'Teutonic' a power of 18,000 by twin-screw engines. The 'Campania,' therefore, is upwards of half as much again more powerful than the largest, swiftest, and most powerful of her predecessors. The extent by which her engine-power exceeds that of the White Star and Inman 'cracks' is greater than the entire horse-power of the once marvellous 'Great Eastern.'

These engines of the 'Campania' work two long propeller-shafts, each carried through an aperture in the stern close to the centre-line, and fitted to a screw. Unlike other twin-screw vessels, the propellers and shafts are, as it were, carried within the hull, and not in separate structures. Aft of the screws, the rudder is completely submerged, and is a great mass of steel-plating weighing about twenty-four tons.

With a straight stem, an elliptic stern, two

huge funnels, and a couple of pole-masts—intended more for signalling purposes than for canvas—the 'Campania' looks thoroughly business-like, and has none of the over-elaborated get-up of the 'Great Eastern,' with her double system of propulsion and small forest of masts. The bulwarks are close fore and aft; and from the upper deck rise two tiers of houses, the roofs of which form the promenade deck and the shade deck. In the structure of the hull and decks enormous strength has been given, with special protection at vital parts, as the vessel is built in compliance with the Admiralty requirements for armed cruisers. Below the line of vision are four other complete tiers of beams, plated with steel sheathed in wood, on which rest upper, main, lower, and orlop decks. The last is for cargo, refrigerating-chambers, stores, &c.—all the others are devoted to the accommodation of passengers.

The 'Campania' is fitted to carry 460 first-class passengers, 280 second-class, and 700 steerage passengers—in all, 1440, besides a crew of 400. She has cargo-space for 1600 tons, which seems a trifle in comparison with her size, but then it is to be remembered that the fuel consumption of those 96 furnaces is enormous, and requires the carrying of a very heavy cargo of coals for internal consumption.

The accommodation for passengers is probably the most perfect that has yet been provided on an ocean steamer, for here the experience of all previous developments has been utilised. The dining-room is an apartment 100 feet long and 64 feet broad, furnished in handsome dark old mahogany, to seat 430 persons. The upholstery is tastefully designed, and the fittings generally are elegant; but the peculiar feature is a splendid dome rising to a height of thirty-three feet from the floor to the upper deck, and designed to light both the dining-room and the drawing-room on the deck above it. The grand staircase which conducts to these apartments is of teakwood; the drawing-room is in satin-wood relieved with cedar and painted frieze panels. The smoking-room on the promenade deck is as unlike a ship's cabin as can be imagined; it is, in fact, a reproduction of an old baronial hall of the Elizabethan age, with oaken furniture and carvings. The other public apartments, library, boudoir, &c., are all more remarkable for quiet taste and artistic effect than for the gorgeousness of gilded saloons affected on some lines, but the prevailing feeling is one of luxurious comfort. The staterooms for first-class passengers occupy the main, upper, and promenade decks, and they are as much like real bedrooms as the old type of 'berths' are not. Besides the single bedrooms, there are suites of rooms for families or parties, finely appointed with ornamental woods, rich carpets, and with brass bedsteads instead of the old wooden bunks. All the sleeping-rooms are as light, lofty, and well ventilated as the sleeping-rooms on the old liners were the reverse.

The first-class passengers are placed amidships; the second-class are placed aft; and the steerage, forward. The steerage accommodation is superior to anything yet provided in that class; while the second-class accommodation is quite up to the usual first-class, with spacious, beautifully furnished staterooms, a handsome dining-room in

oak, an elegant drawing-room in satin-wood, and a cosy smoking-room. Indeed, some of the second-class apartments look as if they were intended to be utilised for first-class passengers in times of extra pressure.

These are details of interest to possible passengers and to those who have already experienced the comforts and discomforts of the Atlantic voyage. But the great interest of the ship, of course, is in her immense size and enormous power. The navigating-bridge from which the officer in charge will direct operations, is no less than sixty feet above the water-level, and from there one obtains a survey unique of its kind. The towering height, the vast expanse of deck, the huge circumference of the funnels, the forest of ventilators indicative of the hives of industry below, the great lighthouse structures which take the place of the old angle-bedded side-lights—everything beneath you speaks of power and speed, of strength and security.

The following table shows at a glance how the 'Campania' compares with her largest predecessors in point of size and power :

	Tonnage.	Length in feet.	Breadth in feet.	Horse- power.
Great Eastern.....	18,900	682	82	7,650
Britannic.....	5,000	455	46	5,500
Arizona.....	5,150	450	45	6,300
Servia.....	8,500	515	52	10,300
Alaska.....	6,400	500	50	10,500
City of Rome.....	8,000	545	52	11,890
Aurania.....	7,270	470	57	8,500
Oregon.....	7,375	500	54	7,375
America.....	5,528	482	51	7,354
Umbria.....	7,700	501	57	14,320
Etruria.....	7,800	520	57	14,500
City of Paris.....	10,500	560	63	18,500
Teutonic.....	9,860	582	57½	18,000
Normannia.....	—	520	57½	16,350
Campania.....	12,950	620	65	30,000

As to speed, the record of course is to be broken. In 1850 the average passage of a Cunarder westward was thirteen days, and eastward twelve days sixteen hours; in 1890, the average was reduced to seven days fifteen hours twenty-three minutes, and seven days four hours and fifty-two minutes, respectively. The fastest individual passages down to 1891 were made by the 'Etruria,' westwards in six days one hour and forty-seven minutes; and by the 'Umbria,' eastwards in six days three hours and seventeen minutes. But these were beaten by the 'Teutonic,' which reduced the homeward record to five days and twenty-one hours; and by the 'City of Paris,' which reduced the outward passage to five days and sixteen hours. Now the 'Campania' is expected to maintain at sea an average speed of twenty-two knots; while the 'City of Paris' speed on this record voyage averaged 20·48 knots. On this basis the new Cunarders should make the passage between Queenstown and New York in five and a quarter days; and if, as is predicted, they can maintain, when the engines get into thorough working-order, a speed of twenty-three knots—that is, about twenty-five and a half miles—an hour, they will come very near making the ideal five-day passage which has been the dream of naval experts for the last ten years. Roughly speaking, these new Cunarders are about ten times the size and forty times the power of the pioneers of the fleet, and the 'Cam-

pania' will run every twenty minutes almost as many miles as the 'Britannia' could laboriously make in an hour.

Is it possible that within the next fifty years we shall be able to make the voyage to New York in three days? The old 'Britannia' took fourteen days to Boston, and it was not until 1852 that the ten days' record to New York was broken by the Collins Company. If, then, in forty years we reduced the record from ten to five, who can say that the limit of speed has yet been reached?

THE RED-HOT NEEDLE.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT a month after Ambrose Burdon's interview with the old Chinaman—that is to say, towards the end of the month of August, at about eight o'clock in the evening, John Felling, head of the open Bill Department in the head office of the Pacific Bank, turned out of Cannon Street by one of those odd little lanes which the majority of people pass without noticing, passed under the projecting clock of an ancient church, ascended a flight of steps, and was in what had of old been the burial-ground attached to the ancient church, but which was now a pleasant little oasis of turf and green leaves amidst the gaunt, bare, prosaic surroundings. At first sight he might very well have been mistaken by a not very careful scrutiniser for Ambrose Burdon, for he was of the same height and build, and had the same fair hair and blue eyes, and the same regular, unremarkable features. It was only when you saw the two men together that the differences between them became at once palpable, and that you wondered how you could ever have thought them alike.

Upon this particular evening Jack Felling walked with very little of his usual athletic swing, although he was going to meet his lady-love. His face was grave; and as he threw himself on to a garden seat by the side of a very small nurse struggling with a very big baby, and pulled out his pipe, he sighed heavily. Then he lit his comforter, and pulled away so vigorously that the small nurse, in order to save the big baby from suffocation, dragged it away, which was just what the amiable Mr Felling wanted.

He puffed away for a quarter of an hour. Then he suddenly jumped up, knocked his pipe out, and hurried forward with something of a smile on his face to meet a girl who was ascending the steps. She was a tall, shapely girl, with a pleasing rather than a pretty face; with eyes which beamed with kindness rather than with vivacity, or wit, or keen intelligence, brown eyes, matching in hue the wavy brown hair which would trespass over her forehead. She was well but quietly dressed; and her presence in this dim old London City churchyard caused no little whispering and wondering amongst such of the caretaker's and housekeeper's children as had not seen her there night after night. For, be it understood, these interviews were stolen; and the two prim aunts with whom she boarded and lodged somewhere in the Euston Road, had no more idea that the object of their niece's nightly expeditions was to meet a young man, than they had of the fortune to which she was heiress. However, here Ruth Tunstall was, radiant with

joy and happiness until she beheld her lover's face.

'What is the matter, dear?' she said after the greeting. 'Are you still depressed about our position? Never mind! We are together, Jack; and we ought to be so awfully, unspeakably happy.—But tell me, Jack. Remember, sir, we are betrothed now, and there should be no secrets between us.'

'Well, dear,' replied Jack, 'if you will know. First of all, there's bad news about your cousin, Ambrose Burdon.'

'Indeed! I hope he's not ill?' said the girl.

'No. But there's been a big robbery at the Yokohama branch, and the Directors have ordered him home to explain. In fact, he should be here soon. He started three weeks ago.'

'And that means?'—

'Well, I'm afraid it means that he'll get the sack.'

'Get the?— Oh, I know! Oh Jack, do you think so? What a terrible thing!'

'Yes; it would be a serious thing for him; for he can't be very well off, and it's awkward to have to begin life again at forty.'

'But, Jack, Cousin Ambrose hasn't done wrong, has he?'

'No, dear,' replied Jack, smiling. 'He hasn't done actual wrong; but he hasn't prevented wrong being done by others, and, in the eyes of a Board of Directors, that's almost as bad. Depend upon it, they have full information, or they wouldn't get rid of so valuable a servant as your cousin.'

'Well, I'm very, very sorry,' said Ruth.

'So am I,' said her lover; 'although I can't say I was particularly smitten with him when he was last at home.'

'No; I know you weren't,' said the girl. 'But my recollection of him is very pleasant.'

'I'm glad of it, dear. Perhaps I've formed a hasty estimate of him. I think we men are apt to judge those harshly who don't look you in the face when you're talking to them.'

'Well, well, we'll see,' said Ruth. 'Perhaps things, after all, won't turn out so badly.—But you're disheartened about something, dear; what is it?'

'Yes, I am,' replied Jack.

'What is it? Remember, there should be no secrets between us now.'

'Well, I'm not sure that I'm treating you straightforwardly, Ruth.'

'Jack!' exclaimed the girl, all the light fading from her face as she threw into her utterance of the monosyllable that amazed, startling, fearful emphasis with which a woman can arm the smallest word with the vigour of an entire sentence.

'Yes; I mean it, Ruth,' said the young man.

'Look here. I'm a clerk on two hundred and fifty a year, which with your hundred a year represents the entire capital with which we are going to start life. You've been accustomed to all the comforts, and many of the luxuries of life; but although I'll do my best to give you most of the comforts, I shall be asking you to give up many things which, although luxuries, are, to those accustomed to them, almost necessities.'

'Oh dear, dear, dear!' cried Ruth, 'what aggra-

vating creatures men are! You begin your speech in such a way as to make me prepare myself for a terrible revelation; and the whole thing dwindles into a fear on your part that my tender frame should sink under the weight of a small income. Well, now look here, my dear, timid Jack. When I marry you, I hope that we shall have all the comforts and as many of the luxuries of life as we shall need'—

'But, my dear girl'—

'Wait, sir! I'm talking. It's rude to interrupt. I don't think I shall care about your being in the City all day.'

'My good Ruth'—

'Sir!—No, I want to have more of you. Besides, we must see a little of the world. I should suppose that I'm the only girl of my education and bringing up in the parish who has never been to Paris, or Brussels, or Rome.'

John Felling groaned, and there was a comical look of despair on his face. 'Ruth! I must speak; I really must'—

'Sir, if I have to warn you again, I shall say good-night and be off.'

'But Ruth, it's utterly'—

'In short, you must give up the bank.'

The proposition was so intensely absurd, that Felling could contain himself no longer, and although in his heart he was not in much mood for mirth, sent peal after peal of laughter ringing into the air, until the children looked up from their play, and a passing policeman paused at so unusual a sound in the heart of the stern City.

'Well,' said Ruth, whose lips were twitching with laughter, although she was not actually laughing, 'and what is there comic in that, sir?'

'Why, the idea—the very idea of my giving up the bank, so that you and I can go to—where is it? Paris, and Brussels, and Rome'—

'Yes, and perhaps Egypt or the Riviera for the winter,' put in Ruth.

'Yes—all on your hundred a year! Ha, ha, ha! Ruth, you are so jolly green. I believe you must think the purchasing power of one hundred pounds sterling to be unlimited.'

'A hundred a year! Oh dear, no. I don't expect to do all that on a hundred a year. But perhaps we might on nine hundred a year.'

John Felling looked at his sweetheart. She was perfectly serious. So he became serious too.

'Come, Ruth, we've had a good laugh; but now let us talk like the serious couple we intend to be,' he said.

'I'm quite serious. Indeed, I've never been otherwise,' replied Ruth. 'What is the most astonishing piece of news I could give you?'

'Why, that some dear old lady, whom I may have assisted over a crossing or otherwise been attentive to, should have left me enough money to justify me in chucking up the bank, and enable us to go to Paris and all the rest of it.'

Ruth handed him a letter. It bore the Yokohama post-mark, and was addressed in Ambrose Burdon's writing. He opened it and read:

'MY DEAR COUSIN RUTH—Many thanks for your kind and pleasant letter—so kind and pleasant, that I cannot make you a better return than by giving you a piece of very good and, as I think it, very wonderful news. Well, you

remember that your father always gave himself out to be, and always believed himself to be, a very poor man. This was waggish of him, although he probably intended you to receive the impression as a wholesome deterrent against foolish behaviour, for it turns out that he was a rich man, and that when you come of age you will inherit all his wealth. His instructions to the trustees for his estate were that his will was only to be opened within six months of your coming of age, unless, of course, you should die before that event. This has now been done; so that on December the 24th next you will be absolute mistress of over twenty thousand pounds—say about nine hundred pounds per annum.'

'Why!—my dear Ruth!' was all the young man could say.)

Ruth continued reading: 'My dear cousin, I am sure I most heartily wish you all health and happiness to enjoy this unexpected good fortune. You tell me of your engagement to young Felling, and I congratulate you upon it, for I know him to be a good, steady fellow; and I feel sure he will make you the husband you, from all accounts, and from what I remember, deserve. I may possibly be in England upon business before very long, and one of my first duties will be to call upon you and congratulate you *in propria persona*.—Your affectionate cousin,

AMBROSE BURDON.'

'Of all the pieces of good-luck!' exclaimed Jack, half-a-dozen times in succession. He was too much amazed to be very intelligent in his remarks. 'And you knew it all the time, Ruth, and were chaffing me, and working me up into such a state of worry about what I considered your castles in the air, that I really don't know how it would have ended!'

'If Cousin Ambrose comes home, Jack, you will be quite friendly with him, won't you?' said Ruth.

'Of course, my dear,' replied the young man. 'He speaks so handsomely of me in a private letter to you, that I must admit I have judged him hardly. What a rum thing that he does not say anything about the robbery.'

'Is it so very "rum," dear? He knew it would take away from my pleasure at the other news; and besides, he isn't condemned yet. From what I have heard you say, it seems that the Home authorities of an Eastern bank expect their officers abroad to be provided with double sets of faculties; and you've told me that if a Chinaman makes up his mind to do you, do you he will, no matter how clever you are! So he may get off, and he evidently thinks he will.—But Jack, suppose anything were to happen to me before I came of age?—

'My dear girl!'

'Well—the unforeseen is always happening. In that case, what would become of all this money?'

'Why, dear, unless the will arranges otherwise, I suppose your next of kin would have it,' replied Jack. 'Who is your nearest relation?'

'Why, Cousin Ambrose, I suppose,' said Ruth. 'I know of nobody else.'

The young man simply raised his eyebrows and said nothing.

'Oh, how thankful we ought to be for our good fortune!' exclaimed Ruth.

'So we are, dear, I hope,' said her lover, pressing her hand. The church beadle came up at that moment to lock the garden for the night, or there is not a doubt that the young man would have emphasised his remark with a kiss. So they sauntered out and homewards, perhaps as happy a couple as could be found in the City of London that night.

BRITISH AMAZONS.

THERE are several well-authenticated instances of women serving in the ranks of the army, and passing with honour through the perils and vicissitudes of war. Colonel Carter, in his *Curiosities of War*, quotes the following inscription, which is still to be found on a tombstone in the church of St Nicolas, Brighton: 'In Memory of PHOEBE HASSEL, who was born at Stepney in the year 1713. She served for many years as a private soldier in the 5th Regiment of Foot, in different parts of Europe; and in the year 1745 fought, under the command of the Duke of Cumberland, at the battle of Fontenoy, when she received a bayonet-wound in her arm. Her long life, which commenced in the time of Queen Anne, extended to the reign of George IV., by whose munificence she received comfort and support in her latter years. She died at Brighton, where she had long resided, December 12, 1821, aged 108 years.'

Very little is known of Phoebe Hassel beyond the fact that she actually served as a private for many years with bravery and honour. George IV. allowed her a pension of half a guinea a week, which she enjoyed for many years.

In 1741 a curious book was published in London, entitled, *The Life and Adventures of Mrs Christian Davies, the British Amazon, commonly called Mother Ross*, which professes to give an account of the various 'transactions, both serious and diverting,' in which this extraordinary woman took part whilst serving as a trooper in Lord Hay's Regiment of Dragoons, better known as the 'Scots Greys.' A badly-executed frontispiece which faces the title-page, itself a curiosity, depicts 'Mother Ross' both in the uniform of a dragoon of the period, with a carbine slung over her shoulder, and a drawn sword in her hand; and also in female attire as a sutler, with a basket containing bottles of wine, and a glass in her right hand. The book is evidently in the main a true relation of the startling vicissitudes and adventures which were crowded into her remarkable life. Her father was a maltster and brewer, and his business was sufficiently large to necessitate his employing some twenty men, his family being reared in the midst of comfort and plenty.

Christian from her earliest years was as much inclined to outdoor employments as she was disinclined to the more maidenly occupations of needlework and household duties; she could handle a pitchfork with more facility than a needle. We may quote her own words: 'I was never better pleased than when I was following the plough, or had a rake, flail, or pitchfork in my hands, which implements I could handle

with as much strength and dexterity, if not more, than any of my mother's servants. I used to get upon the horses and ride them barebacked about the fields, leaping hedges and ditches.' Her father's loyalty to James II. induced him to sell all that he had of value and apply the proceeds to the defence of his tottering throne. He succeeded in raising a troop of horse, and equipped it entirely at his own cost, and led it with some credit into action at the famous battle of the Boyne.

During his absence, an event occurred which exhibited in a striking manner the courageous spirit that animated his daughter. We cannot do better than quote it in her own language: 'While my father bore arms for King James, the neighbouring Papists, in time of divine service, came to and blocked up the church door of Leslip with butchers' blocks and other lumber. My mother was then in the church; I was at home; but hearing the noise, and fearing my mother might receive some hurt, I snatched up a spit, and thus armed, sallied forth to force my way and come to her assistance; but being resisted by a sergeant, I thrust my spit through the calf of his leg, removed the things which had blocked up the door, and called to my mother, bidding her come away, for dinner was ready. In the scuffle, the Rev. Mr. Malary, the Clerk, with several others, were wounded, and I taken into custody for having hurt the sergeant.' The facts of the case becoming known, and the sergeant with his friends being evidently in the wrong, after a short delay, Christian was acquitted and set at liberty.

The next event described is a love affair with a distant cousin, 'whose uncle on the father's side was a bishop.' It culminated in a manner discreditable to both, and proved a source of considerable sorrow to our heroine.

James II. having to flee the country, her father became a fugitive from justice; and although a pardon was eventually obtained for him, his effects were seized and confiscated by the Government. Christian, however, did not long endure the hardship of poverty, for on the death of her aunt she inherited her business, that of an inn, which proved the source of a considerable income.

Amongst her servants was a young man named Richard Walsh, for whom she soon began to entertain a strong feeling of affection, which he in secret returned. Her well-known strength of character—to call it by no other name—made him hesitate in declaring his passion, and it was not until she herself made overtures, through a female friend, that matters were satisfactorily arranged. He proved himself to be 'a careful and obliging husband,' but, unfortunately, was not proof against the temptations of the bottle. One day, after drinking a considerable quantity of wine with an old school-fellow, he was persuaded to go on board a vessel with recruits and have a bowl of punch in the captain's cabin. The result was that, being overcome with drink, he was carried off to Helvoetsluys, and there enlisted in Lord Orrery's Regiment of Foot, now known as the 'First Royals.' His wife not hearing from him for twelve months, had just put herself into mourning, believing him to be dead, when she received a letter

from him, complaining that he had written eleven letters home without obtaining an answer to any of them.

In spite of the fact that she had two children living, one born after his father's enlistment, she determined to proceed to Flanders in search of him. After providing for the welfare of her children, she cut her hair short, and dressing herself in a suit of her husband's clothes, proceeded to Dublin, where she enlisted in Captain Tichbourn's company of the regiment commanded by the Marquis de Pisare, under the name of Christopher Walsh. On arriving in Flanders, the company soon joined the grand army, and our heroine gained her first experience of war in the battle of Landen—the 'sound of the cannon playing and small-shot rattling round her' throwing her into a 'kind of panic,' not being accustomed to 'such rough music.' She had the misfortune to be wounded just above the ankle, which placed her *hors de combat* for several weeks.

Immediately on her return to duty, she had a narrow escape from drowning at the dikes of Gertruydenberg; and although she escaped this danger, within a few days she was captured by the French, with sixty of her comrades, whilst out on a foraging expedition. Owing to the good offices of 'King James's Queen,' the English prisoners were exceptionally well treated; whilst the Dutch were kept in filthy dungeons and supplied with only half a pound of bread daily. After nine days' imprisonment, she was exchanged with many other prisoners, and went into winter-quarters with the army at Gorkham.

We must allow her to relate the startling adventures she met with in this place: 'In my frolic, to kill time, I made my addresses to a burgher's daughter, who was young and pretty. As I had formerly had a great many fine things said to myself, I was at no loss in the amorous dialect.' She acted her part so well that the simple girl gave her heart fully into the pseudo-soldier's keeping. A sergeant of the same regiment, filled with a mad jealousy, grossly insulted the girl, who complained to Christian. A duel resulted, which is described in the following terms: 'We both drew, and the first thrust I made gave him a wound in the right pap. He returned this with a long gash in my right arm; but before he could recover his guard I gave him a thrust in the right thigh. The next pass he aimed at my breast, but hit my right arm, though it was little more than a prick of a pin, he being feeble from loss of blood.'

The noise of the combat brought up the guard, and she was imprisoned, as it was feared that the sergeant's wounds were mortal. The father of the young lady obtained our heroine's release, the payment of her arrears of pay, and permission to serve in another regiment, but not with a view of giving his daughter's hand in marriage to her. The young woman was willing to elope; but this Christian refused to do, and asked the maiden to wait until she had gained a commission by bravery.

She then entered Lord Hay's Regiment of Dragoons, and learned her duties as a trooper. During the year 1695 she served during the siege of Namur, and spent the winter with her regiment at the Boss.

The peace of Ryswick brought about the partial disbanding of her regiment, and she at once returned to Dublin. Here no one recognised her; and as she found that the nurse with whom she had left her children intended to present a bill beyond her means of discharging, she decided to remain incognito.

War breaking out again, she at once re-enlisted in Lord Hay's regiment, and saw a great deal of fighting. She escaped unharmed at Nimeguen, but her horse was wounded at the siege of Venloo. At Liège she obtained a considerable quantity of valuable plate by way of loot, which she sold to a Dutch Jew for a ridiculously low sum. At Donawert she received a very severe wound. She was present at the famous battle of Blenheim, and whilst guarding some of the prisoners taken in that action, she recognised her husband, who happened at that moment to be embracing a Dutchwoman. She made herself known to him, and forgave his faults, but absolutely refused him permission to disclose her sex. They agreed that she should pass as his brother until the termination of the war; and after giving him some gold from her secret store, they parted.

In spite of this meeting with her husband, her 'frolicsome' spirit induced her to pay attentions to a 'pretty vrow,' which fortunately ended less disastrously than her former love affair. At Ramillies she escaped unhurt through the hottest of the battle; but the last shell fired by the French struck her on the back of the head and fractured her skull. She was trepanned, and her sex at last discovered. The news spread rapidly, and she experienced the most courteous and liberal treatment from the officers of the army. Under pressure from the Duke of Marlborough, she was remarried to her husband, the ceremony being attended by a large number of officers, who all kissed the bride before leaving. She was appointed cook to her husband's regiment; and at the siege of Ath, seizing a musket, she killed one of the enemy during a fierce encounter. At the same moment a ball from the enemy struck her in the mouth, splitting her under lip, and knocking one of her teeth into her mouth. She says: 'Both this shot and mine, with which I killed the soldier, were so exactly at a time, that none could distinguish whether I fell by the recoiling of the piece or the enemy's ball. My husband and some of his comrades ran to take me up, and seeing the blood, imagined I was shot through the head; but I convinced them to the contrary by spitting the ball and tooth into my hand.'

At Courtrai she won a race on her mare with Captain Montgomery of her husband's regiment, who had ridiculed her dress and the wretched steed she rode. To let her speak for herself, she says: 'I offer'd to run her against his horse for a pistole, and we would both ride. Brigadier Godfrey, who was by, laid another pistole on my side. We both went to the place chosen to run upon, and starting at the beat of the drum, he suffer'd me to keep pace with him for some time; but finding he was going to leave me, I made a furious push at him, flung man and horse into a ditch, and thus won the race. The brigadier laughed heartily at my stratagem; the captain was half angry; but I got a couple of pistoles.'

Her husband was killed at the battle of Malplaquet; but at the end of eleven weeks she married Hugh Jones, a grenadier in the same regiment. Her second husband was mortally wounded at the siege of St Venant, and she found herself a second time a widow. Her third husband, who survived her, was a soldier named Davies, serving in the Welsh Fusiliers. Queen Anne gave her a pension of one shilling a day, to which she added by making farthing pies and selling strong liquors in Tuttle Fields, Westminster.

She died on the 7th of July 1739, aged seventy-two, from a fever contracted whilst nursing her husband in Chelsea College, and was buried with military honours in the cemetery belonging to Chelsea Hospital.

A PAGE FROM THE ANNALS OF AN INDIAN VILLAGE.

THE village money-lender in India has a use and a position that it is very hard for people in England to realise. A native saying describes him as the 'salvation and the ruin' of the cultivators; and it is a perfectly just description. Without him they would often find it impossible to farm their lands; and yet by him they are often almost pauperised. Most of the Indian cultivators are improvident. When the harvest yield is short, resort must be had to the money-lender before the next harvest, or starvation could not well be avoided. Often a cultivator is without seed for sowing; then it is from the money-lender he borrows it. The purchase of cattle to replace those that die, or of a new plough, is commonly made by borrowing from the same source. When money or seed or grain is borrowed, an extortionate rate of interest is demanded; it cannot, as a rule, be paid; and the unpaid sum is added to the principal debt, which frequently doubles in four or five years.

The cultivator, as a rule, is long-suffering, and not easily roused to any act, or even expression of enmity, unless the pressure of successive bad seasons has made the harsh dealings of the money-lenders feel more and more burdensome, until they become intolerable. In such circumstances, they sometimes break out into riots, with occasional acts of personal violence. It is one of these occasional outrages, with its far-reaching consequences, that we shall now describe, as it exhibits many phases of modern Indian life, that are interesting by reason of their great unlikeness to anything known in England.

In a large and prosperous village in the southern part of the Mahratta country, a Brahmin money-lender is still living, whose father and grandfather before him had been the largest and most prosperous of the money-lenders for many miles around. He has clients among the inhabitants of all the surrounding villages, and possesses capital enough for large loans and for advances to the petty money-lenders of his own neighbourhood. In the same place live the Khetkars, a widespread and at one time a very prosperous family. From time immemorial the Khetkars had been the hereditary head-men of the town—'Patels' as they are called. The Patel, though an hereditary officer, is a servant of Government,

and is the head of the local police, and chief tax-gatherer of the township. Even now he is usually a man of considerable influence, and much respected; formerly, he was frequently a man of large power, one with whom it was dangerous to be on bad terms. One of these Khetkar chiefs many years ago had been the means of having the present money-lender's great-grandfather hanged; and thus began a feud which was far-reaching in its consequences.

The dead man left a son, who determined to be revenged, though he kept this determination an absolute secret. With the Khetkars he succeeded in restoring the old relations, by professing to believe that his father was guilty, though he well knew him to be innocent. He continued, like his father, to be the person to whom the Khetkars went in all times of pecuniary difficulty. Such times came more and more frequently, for order and law were rapidly succeeding disorder and anarchy; and before many years had passed, the country came directly under British rule. The Khetkars, always an extravagant and improvident family, had no longer opportunities, as in former days, of levying blackmail and extorting forced loans, and they rapidly found the produce of the family lands insufficient for their expenditure. The money-lender was resorted to oftener than before and for larger loans. At first the loans were given on simple bonds; but as the amount borrowed grew larger and larger, the mortgage of lands was demanded; and the Khetkars began to fall into the power of the money-lender. The resources of the family, however, were still too large for the money-lender to take any steps towards realising his dream of revenge. In time, he died; and on his death-bed he made his son, Wamanrao, swear by the life of his own little son, a boy of three years, that he would in his turn devote himself to the fulfilment of a scheme of revenge. This oath was one of peculiar sanctity; and having sworn it, Wamanrao became as devoted as his father had been to the family cause.

Within fifteen years of the death of Wamanrao's father the affairs of the Khetkars became very seriously involved. The chief of the family of that time, named Santaji, was about to betroth his daughter, aged three years, to the five-year-old son of the head-man of a neighbouring village. The astrologers had been consulted, and had declared the time to be most propitious and the intended husband most suitable. But the caste rules, the position and the traditions of the family, required that the betrothal should be celebrated with lavish expenditure; and Santaji was absurdly impecunious. He visited Wamanrao, and asked for a very large loan, so large, that Wamanrao declared he also must consult the astrologers, for he could not lend so large a sum if the time were unpropitious. There were two astrologers in the village who were to be consulted, and were to give a joint opinion. One was a friend of Santaji, who promised him a handsome reward if his reading of the stars was favourable to the loan; the other was a friend of Wamanrao, and the money-lender informed him he should regard it as a matter worthy of substantial reward if the stars declared that the loan could safely be granted on the condition of a mortgage of certain fields, which he named.

The result was the astrologers were both of opinion that the time was most propitious for a loan, provided that these particular fields were mortgaged. It happened, as Wamanrao very well knew, that these fields were the best in the whole village, had been in the Khetkars' family longer than any others, and were peculiarly prized by them. But so desperate was Santaji's need for money, that he mortgaged the fields after some slight demur, trusting that no harm would come of it. The terms of the mortgage were that the fields were to become the money-lender's at the end of ten years, unless the loan, principal and interest, was fully paid up, and that the fields were to be the security for the interest year by year.

At the end of the first year the interest was paid; at the end of the second year, only half the interest due was paid; and the money-lender, with apparent good-will, refused to press for payment. At the end of the third year nothing was paid, and still Wamanrao seemed to be strangely magnanimous. At the end of the fourth year, also, nothing was paid; and now interest for two years and a half, amounting to one half the whole loan, was due. Then Wamanrao demanded payment. Santaji said he had no means of paying. The money-lender was obdurate, his client helpless. At last, the former declared that if he did not receive the money, he must take the land; but this Santaji said he would never agree to; he would never part with the land that was more highly prized and dearer to the family than all the rest in the village.

Thereupon, Wamanrao instituted a suit to recover the interest, or, in default, to recover his due by distress and sale of the three fields. When notice of this suit was served on Santaji, he swore that Wamanrao deserved to be hanged, like his grandfather, and wished that he had the power to compass his death. But times were changed since the old days; the Khetkars feared the English judge. In his extremity, Santaji sought the advice of an acute and much respected native lawyer. The lawyer questioned him closely regarding all the details of the case, and then suggested that Santaji should deny the mortgage and assert the deed to be a forgery. This struck the Khetkar as an eminently desirable and very clever way out of the difficulty; but he remembered that the deed had been taken by himself to the Registry Office, and that the registrar, who was a most respectable man, and would not tell lies for any but a very large bribe indeed, had seen him there, and heard him state that he had signed the deed and mortgaged the land. Santaji expressed his doubts, and besought the lawyer to suggest some other equally desirable way out of the difficulty. After much thought, the lawyer held that the only other satisfactory defence to the suit was to assert that the interest had been paid, bringing witnesses and receipts to prove it.

Thereupon, a reply to the suit was filed, setting forth that the interest claimed had been paid, and that the money-lender was little better than one of the wicked, being both an extortioner and a liar. Wamanrao was somewhat astonished at this; but, nevertheless, he filed the mortgage deed in court, prepared to proceed with his case,

to be seen on the style, which fills up the inner space in curly flowers. To this, small insects adhere, and can proceed no farther; but large insects, like the bee, can thrust their proboscis between the style and the petals, and reach the nectar of which they are in search.

A peculiar feature of most of these plants is that their viscidty is only temporary, for as soon as the flowering season is at an end, and the visits of wingless insects can do no harm, the protective secretion becomes dried up and non-adhesive.

A widely diffused mode of defence is seen in the thorns, &c., which are to be found on the leaves, stem, or calyx of different plants. Against soft-bodied insects, like caterpillars, the viscous exudation would be no defence whatever, as they could cross it with impunity; but a formidable array of prickles is a barrier which they cannot surmount. To add to the effectiveness of this mode of protection, not only are the prickles arranged point downwards, so that a creeping insect is confronted with their sharp end first, but they accumulate the nearer they are to the flower. A good example of this mode of defence may be found in the common thistle, whose lower leaves are much less thickly set with prickles than the upper ones. Again, the leaves of these plants are all concave, which further adds to the protection of the flower.

Another defence against trespassing insects is seen in the hairy formations which block up the entrance to some blossoms, and which serve to obstruct the passage of weak and useless insects, but are easily overcome by the stronger and beneficial ones. In other cases, access to the flower is impeded by parts of the plant being bent, dilated, or crowded together, as in the snapdragon, the mouth of which is so firmly closed that only a powerful insect, like the bee, can force it open; by the anthers combining so as to form a hollow cone round the pistil, as in the potato blossom; or by the stamens crowding round or the stigmas covering the corolla, as if by a lid. In other flowers, protection is afforded by swellings round the entrance to the nectary. For example, in the convolvulus the filaments expand and cause the central space of the corolla to be divided into passages resembling the arrangement of a five-chambered revolver, into which nothing but the fine proboscis of a bee can enter. In the bladder campion the calyx stands well out from the blossom, so that any insect which eats through the flower-cup gets no nearer the nectar, because the distance in that direction is as great as the distance from the mouth of the corolla.

How often in crossing a meadow have we found water stored up in the little cup formed by the conical bases of the opposite leaves of some plants! The purpose of these pools is to isolate the stem, and so protect the flower from the ravages of wingless insects.

Another form of protection is seen in the collar formed round a flower by means of embracing leaves, which are generally convex upwards, and slippery on the inside, as in the snowdrop. Creeping insects get as far as the slippery leaves, and in trying to turn the edge, they invariably lose their hold and tumble to the ground.

The common nipplewort ('*Lapsana communis*') and flowers of that class, which are totally unpro-

tected against the attacks of marauding insects, open only during certain hours of the morning, before the dew has dispersed, when they are perfectly safe from the visits of wingless intruders, which never venture abroad until the dew is off the grass.

By reason of their situation, aquatic plants are protected against unwelcome visitors; but in connection with one at least, the spotted knot-grass ('*Polygonum persicaria*'), which, during a drought, is sometimes left high and dry on the banks of a stream, and is utterly defenceless against insect trespassers, a curious circumstance has been observed. In such seasons it has been known to secrete a viscous substance all over the stem, thereby providing a perfect protection against marauders. When, however, the subsequent rains have caused the stream to regain its former level, and there is no more necessity for this glutinous defence, it totally disappears, and the stem assumes its original smoothness.

Again, there are flowers which close their blooms during the day and open only at night, like the white lychnis, evening primrose, night-scented stock, &c. Such flowers have nothing to gain by being open in the daytime, as they are fertilised only by night-flying insects, which are attracted by the sweet-smelling odour they exhale, such perfume being given off only at night, the flower being scentless during the day. Night-blooming plants are generally either yellow or white, so that they are easily seen in the dark by the insects from whose visits they benefit.

The bird-cherry and some of the vetches, which are entirely defenceless against the attacks of wingless insects, possess a wonderful device for 'buying off,' as it were, unwelcome visitors, since on the under side of the leaves are a number of epidermic cells containing nectar. In these the marauder finds sweets to his heart's content, and does not ascend farther, and thus the fertilisation of the plant is not interfered with.

Truly, the more the secrets of nature are investigated, the more apparent becomes the truth of the old saying with which this article was commenced—that everything in this world was designed to fulfil some purpose.

IN BLOSSOM-TIME.

In Blossom-time, when all the land was white
With drifting May, and tremulous silver light
Stretched, like a jewelled path, across the sea,
You told the story of your love to me;
And when you saw my downbent face grow bright,
You smiled, and said: 'Twas only meet and right
That sweet new hopes should wing their happy flight
To maidens' hearts, and nest there tenderly
In blossom-time.'

Now, Spring is past, and on the gorse-clad height,
Where Day is loth to don the veil of Night,
You ask: 'When seems the world most fair to thee?'
And (still in love, as wedded folks should be),
I answer through glad tears that dim my sight:
'In blossom-time.'

E. MATHESON.

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THE ELY FEN-LAND.

By S. BARING-GOULD.

ONE of the most eloquent passages from the pen of the late Charles Kingsley is that in which, in his *Hermits*, he describes the condition of the vast Fen districts extending from Peterborough to the chalk hills of Cambridge, as it was before man took it in hand to drain it. He pictures the wondrous world of wild-fowl that hovered over the meres, the fish that swarmed in the waters, and the wealth of flowers that fringed the pools and floated on their glassy surface. But, beautiful as the Fen region was, it had its disadvantages: fish and fowl alike fed on insects; and mosquitoes, gadflies, and gnats swarmed there, rendering life insupportable to such as had not been born in the Fens, and whose skins had not become tough and rough with incessant stinging during the warm part of the year.

The beauty of the Fens is gone—it is Fen-land no longer. The water is drawn away, and the alluvial and peaty soil is the richest corn-land in England. And yet, here and there lingers something of charm. The dikes are still the homes of waterweed and flowers, and stand rank with yellow flag as strips of gold. In the lagoons that occupy old marl-pits still grows the water-soldier, a singular plant, that lies at the bottom of the water till flowering-time, when it rises to the surface, opens its pure white petals, and then sinks again. It is unlike any other plant we have in the British Isles, more resembling an aloe than any other. Its long stiff leaves are semi-pellucid, and are strangely toothed. It is found in the Rossal pits near Ely. The white-mallow is also to be seen in the Fens, and the blue water-forget-me-not and pink willow-herb abound. Moreover, on the water lie the golden flowers of the water-lily, locally called Brandy-balls. The yellow bog asphodel is not wanting; and the beautiful pale rose flowering rush, and the fair arrowhead with its three-petalled blossoms, adorn every dike.

Insects still abound. The gadfly is very pois-

onous, and lurks among the rushes. A man stung by one is incapacitated from work for two or three days. Here and there rise outcrops of white clay or marl from the dead level of the Fens, and these were formerly islets; their names end in 'ey,' the Norse for isle, as Ely=the Eel isle; Shipecy=the Sheep isle; Thorney=the Thorn isle; Ramsey, Sawtrey, Stuntney, Welney, and the like.

The draining of the Fens was begun by the Romans; and Carr Dike—a drain extending from the Nene to the Witham—is attributed to them. But far more extensive operations were carried on by the monks and the Bishops of Ely. The drainage of the North Level was undertaken by Bishop Morton in the reign of Henry VII.; and he also dug a canal—called after him—a distance of forty miles, to carry off the overflowings of the Nene. In the reign of James I., a Dutchman, Van Muyden, was summoned to undertake the task of the drainage; but the works were brought to a standstill under Charles I. by the Civil War. However, some good work was done. The Bedford Level—seventy feet wide and twenty miles long—took away the superfluous water of the Ouse in floods. Works went on under the House of Hanover, and the Fens were gradually improved; but the complete reclamation of the Fens was undertaken by the great engineer Rennie, and by others who followed him.

The system of drainage may be roughly described as this. Certain main arteries have been established, whereby the rivers Nene, Lark, Ouse, Cam, are carried between high banks to the sea. These banks are built up of chalk rubble and marl, and rise some fourteen feet above the level of the Fen. At distances of two miles, a steam-engine is planted on the bank, and pumps up the water from a 'load' or 'dike' into the main canal or river. These loads are at a considerably lower level than the canal. They are fed by the 'drains' which surround every field, and which are in connection. A windmill is placed at the point where all the water of a certain complex of drains reaches the bank of

the load or dike. The wind is rarely still on the Fens; and it is employed to pump the drain-water into the dikes. The machinery is extremely simple. The wind turns the sails, and they in their revolution set a huge axle in motion that runs from top to bottom of the fabric. At the bottom, by means of cogs, it sets a paddle-wheel in motion, which throws the water up an incline, for the drains are at a lower level than the dikes. The maintenance of the banks, engines, &c., is in the hands of Commissioners. These Commissioners are the landholders of the district and certain elected members. They impose the rates necessary, which amount on an average to six shillings per acre. The Commissioners maintain a body of men, 'bankers,' 'gaulters,' as well as horses and lighters, to keep the banks in repair, dredge the canals, dig the requisite clay, and keep the engines going.

Occasionally, in great rains all the efforts of man are unavailing to keep the Fens from being flooded. A flooded Fen causes serious damage, and takes years to recover. There is now living in the Ely Fen a couple of whom it is said that they settled to be man and wife when a flood swamped the cottage in which they were. Each had to take refuge on a chair and sit on the back with the feet on the seat. Thus they sat for hours looking at each other and waiting to be rescued. Before a boat came to take them off they had made a match of it.

The continuous pumping has dried the spongy 'turf'—that is, peat—to such an extent that the surface of the land has sunk six feet in the last fifty years. It has now ceased to sink, as the peat will no longer contract. The result of this sinking is that houses built half a century ago have their doorsteps a man's height above the level of the road. Moreover, the shrinkage of the land has left the few poor ash-trees that grew in the Fens standing above it on the points of their roots, and they are blown over unless artificially banked up.

The land recovered by drainage is of extraordinary richness; and when it does become somewhat exhausted by the crops grown on it, the restoration of fertility is easily and cheaply effected, for the best possible dressing is actually on the spot. Below the turf or peat, at a depth varying from five to ten feet, lies the clay, rich and greasy, like black butter. A farmer engages 'clayers' to dig down to the 'gault,' nine holes in a chain, and throw up the clay on the surface; for this they receive about three shillings a day. The black butter is spread over the surface, and the dressing is done.

It is in digging these pits after clay that relics of a former age are found—flint weapons, bronze helmets, the tusks of wild-boars, and the horns of elks, sometimes the remains of a boat hewn out of one oak trunk. The former inhabitants of the Fen-land lived either on the islets, or upon platforms raised on piles above the water, precisely like the 'palafite' habitations of pre-historic times in the Swiss lakes, and like the crannogs of Scotland and Ireland. Indeed, this was the case down to the beginning of this century, and a drawing of one is in existence which was made about 1810. The house was wattled and of rushes; the roof had no chimney; the smoke of the fire found its way out through

the thatch as best it could. From the door a ladder led into the water, and at the foot of the ladder lay moored a flat-bottomed boat. Those who lived in these palafite dwellings picked up their subsistence by fishing and fowling, and cultivated a patch of land where left dry in summer. All the refuse of the house was thrown over the edge of the platform, and such heaps of refuse are found now when the plough turns up the soil, where formerly eels burrowed and ducks dived.

The inhabitants of the Fens have no peculiar dialect; their English is singularly good, with only a few peculiarities, as, 'I'm purely' for 'I am well'; 'I doubt' for 'I reckon'; 'frit' for 'frightened'; a 'boy' is a 'baw.' But the signs and names of the taverns are characteristic of the district. Such are 'Five Miles from Anywhere,' 'No Hurry,' 'The Fish and Duck,' 'The Spade and Becket,' 'The Sedgesheaf,' 'The Pike and Eel.' To give a salutation to any one is termed 'giving the seal of the day'; and one who has been overtaken with work is described as being 'played upon.' Surnames are Goat, Chote, Spraggins, Gotobed, Tunkiss, Verlander, Gaultrip, Beamess, Lavender, Cammel. Scriptural Christian names abound, but are oddly clipped; thus, Hezekiah becomes Ki, Ephraim is shortened into Pip; and the favourite Kerenhappuch is squeezed into Kainie or Kenapuc. The Fen men and women are a singularly silent, morose people, and there is little of laughter and play among the children. Unhappily, a great deal of opium is taken in the Fens, and the children are given 'poppy-tea' to keep them asleep when their mothers go out to weed in the fields. Every cottage garden has in it a bed of white poppy, and the consequence is that nervous disorders abound. The use of alcoholic drinks is also extensive in the Fens, and this is to a large extent explicable and excusable, for the Fen water is not potable, and there are no springs in the land. The Fen water is not only unpleasant in the taste and to the smell, but is also unwholesome. The Fen folk are obliged to have recourse to the river water or canal water, which is to a large extent derived from their own dikes and drains. There is no other to be had. Consequently, men and women, and even children, frequent the public-houses in a way not common in other parts of Great Britain. After harvest comes what is called the Horkey Feast, attended by entire households, and these too often degenerate into drunken brawls.

Every cottage garden grows celery, and that to a large extent, for celery is regarded as good against ague. Among the businesses pursued in the Fens is that of 'Gozard,' a goose-keeper; 'a Moler,' employed by the Commissioners to catch moles, which are greatly dreaded, lest they should bore their runs in the banks and let out the water. A 'Banker' is one engaged in keeping up the embankments; and a 'Gaulter' is one who digs in the clay-pits.

Favourite sports are 'dagging' for eels. An instrument locally termed a 'gleve' is made of four jagged knives tied together at the head of a pole. With this a man dags into the water of the dikes and drains, and very frequently brings up an eel writhing between the knives, unable to extricate itself. 'Trunding' for larks is

another sport; it consists in drawing a net over the fields at night. As many as sixty dozen are captured at a time. Coursing is also in great favour. Hares are also caught in nets; the Fen hares are fine creatures, and fetch from fifteen to eighteen shillings. They are sent to Kempton Park to be coursed. Hares when alarmed always run to 'holt.' The holt is the lowest portion of a field, that which is most marshy, and where willows and shrubs grow. There is the only cover to be found in this treeless level, where there is also neither heather nor gorse nor coppice. At Michaelmas is the statute fair at Ely, when farm-servants are engaged for the twelvemonth. The lads tie a band of straw round their legs, and this is taken off as soon as they have hired themselves to a master.

The tools employed in the Fens are peculiar: a 'hadden spade' is a spade that comes to a point; a 'becket' is a long narrow spade with a piece of steel projecting from it at right angles. In going over marshy land, the men walk on stilts, or 'sketches' as they term them; and in working in water, wear 'diking boots' that cover their legs to their thighs.

In winter the great sport is skating, but skates are called 'pattens.' Formerly, sledges were employed to run on the ice, fixed on two horses' leg-bones as runners; and a bridegroom has thus run his bride to church to be married.

Horses used on a farm are not shod in the Fens, as there is no stone there; and the roads, locally termed 'droves,' are unmade with stone. They are broad flat courses, with a ditch on each side; they are sloughs in autumn, frozen hard in all their roughness in winter, and in summer are deep in impalpable dust. The only making they ever get is with a harrow drawn over them; sometimes they are even ploughed, and then harrowed.

Owing to the Fens being a new land, the houses are all modern, and very ugly, of white brick. The cottages are sometimes of brick, sometimes of board, and thatched with rushes. All are built on piles driven into the peat; and if the piles have been badly driven, the houses lean on one side and have cracks in them.

Most of the land belongs to yeomen, sons or grandsons of 'Fen slodgers,' men wise in their generation and shrewd, who bought up the soil as it was being drained, when speculators who had invested grew weary of the repeated calls on their pockets and despaired of seeing a return. These men, on the spot, saw their advantage, bought at very small prices; and their sons and grandsons are now very wealthy. They are in many cases closely related to the workmen they employ, and they are not above turning up their sleeves and working with them, and harder than their best man.

The last scene in a farmer or labourer's career is certainly an impressive one. The largest wain on the estate is drawn forth, and the great farm-horses with black favours are harnessed to it. The coffin is placed in the wagon, and the mourners sit round on the wainboards. The horses, being unshod, step along almost noiselessly, but the bells on their necks tinkle. The labourers follow in lines along the drove, all silent.

There can be no graves in the Fens, for there

is no earth in which to lay the dead; consequently, the funerals have to take place on some of the isles, and the distance gone is often many miles.

The Fen wains are very large, have a high front board, and are usually painted vermilion, sometimes with blue wheels. In this gaily-painted vehicle sit the mourners weeping, as the procession takes its tedious way. The black windmills radiating to the far horizon in lines, seem to form part of the convoy; the Royston crows fluttering on all sides are in full harmony with the occasion; and very usually the sky overhead is sombre and gray. A Fen funeral is a solemn sight, and is eminently picturesque, and the Fen folk seem to feel that it is impressive.

Strange is the power of home over the human heart. Such a country as the Fen-land, one would have supposed, could have exerted no fascination on an inhabitant, so lacking is it in every element of loveliness and cheerfulness and variety. Yet it is not so. A Fen-man hardly ever leaves the Fens; and if by any chance one does get on to high ground, into undulating country, into woodland and rich green pastures by gliding serpentine rivers, he becomes sad; a heartache wears him, and he is not at rest till he has returned to his flat Fen, which is chopped up into squares like a chessboard, and in which he may die, but cannot be buried.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL*

CHAPTER XXI.—DANIEL'S INTERLUDE.

THAT telegram signed 'Daniel' demands full explanation. When George Suffield (the younger) received his uncle's request for a few weeks of Daniel's service, he congratulated himself, on the whole, Daniel was useful—Daniel was even valuable—but that singular encounter with Daniel in the clough, and that mysterious light in the counting-house—which still was unexplained—had made him doubt whether, after all, there might not be more in Daniel than met the eye. He was loth to commit himself to suspicion of Daniel; so he welcomed the opportunity of being parted from Daniel for a time, so that he might turn his qualities over in his mind at leisure and consider whether he really ought to trust him or no.

As for Daniel himself, when Mister George told him that he must prepare at once to go to London to attend again for some weeks upon the Sahib Raynor, he bowed with his hands upon his breast, saying: 'Respectable Mister George, I am obedient as the horse to the rein;' but he went out from Mister George's presence into the night and wept bitterly, flung his white turban on the ground and stamped on it, and then went indoors and packed his bag—and saw that a long knife in a sheath at the bottom of the bag was bright and sharp—and finally he sat down with his chin in his hand and his nails between his teeth and viciously thought. With regard to this journey, he complained, it was a great pity that it must be gone upon!—oh, a very great pity! Just at the time when the things and the business,

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etcetera, which he had set himself to do were beginning to look as if they really would get done, he was removed, taken away, banished! But he would come back! Oh yes! Yet what if the Sahib Raynor said: 'Daniel must stay with me; I need him?' (Daniel chewed his nails with the mere thought of it; for he had not got rid of the old impression that the Sahib Raynor had to be obeyed without question.) He knew, he saw clearly as in a glass, what he would be and do. He would make himself—oh yes!—a stupid person, to the end that the Sahib Raynor might be glad to be rid of him again! And in addition, he would make the Sahib Raynor endure things—yes, he would!—for taking him away from his purpose now and causing him to lose precious time, and perhaps opportunity!

George was very considerate with Daniel next morning, being half-ashamed of his sense of relief that Daniel was going. He carefully instructed him what he must do when he left the train in London in order to reach Rutland Gate without mishap or loss, and he wished to send some one to the station with him to see him off. But Daniel so earnestly protested that he could manage completely by himself, that he was allowed to depart with his bag alone. Had George followed him into the town, he would have understood why he was so resolved to go alone, and he might have seen further reason to be suspicious of his guilelessness.

Arrived in the town, Daniel took a round-about way to the railway station, walking with haste, lest he should lose his train. In a certain old square whose houses, formerly dwelt in by City magnates, were now become business offices, and whose door-jambs or pillars were plastered with the names of men of all nations—Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia—he turned in at a door where was inscribed, among other names, 'TANDERJEE & Co., 2d Floor.' Up to the second floor Daniel lightly climbed, knocked at the door on the glass panel of which appeared 'Mr Tanderjee, Private,' and, without waiting for an invitation, entered. Mr Tanderjee sat at a writing-table, and his gleaming spectacles at once took in the significance of Daniel's appearance.

'A bag!' said he in English. 'You travel! You go away! What is this?' And he rose with a flourish of both his hands towards Daniel.

Daniel cast a hurried glance at the door of the other room, and answered in Tamil: 'It is to be deplored, O worshipper of the sun; but I must serve that I may rule. My former master needs me for a time, and my new master says: "Go. Peace be with you." And I must go: there is no help. But I will come again after not very many days—after, perhaps, another moon—and all will go well.'

Mr Tanderjee gently approached him with two ringed fingers spread in an expository fashion, and the two scoundrels faced each other and looked exceedingly respectable in their black alpaca coats. When they spoke, their tones were soft, which sounded unbecomingly, considering the quarrelsome matter of their conversation.

'It may be,' said he, also in Tamil, 'that all will go well. Yet, my son, consider. Gold-dust I will give much for, but brick-dust no man will buy. Things performed are to me as gold-

dust; promises are but brick-dust: you bring me, my son, only brick-dust.'

'You are unjust, O worshipper of the Lord of Light,' said Daniel. 'Have I not brought you and my wealthy, foolish master nearer together?—Am I not the strong link between you?'

'But the link goes,' said Tanderjee.

'The link will return,' said Daniel. 'Have no fear. And have you not benefited by his purchase of the cotton of India?—is there no gold-dust in that?'

'There is not much, my son. But where are the plans of the new—the precious, the beautiful—machines which are so jealously guarded? You do not bring them to me?' And there was an avid flash and glitter in the Parsee's spectacles.

'I did not find them when I looked. I was disturbed, and almost caught—as I have told you, O worshipper of the Lord of Light. But I cannot fail. I have my way of entering, which no man can guess—except it may be the old Guru, who is a seeker out of strange and secret things; and him will I cause to be sent away when I return.'

'When you return, my son! It is brick-dust, my son!' And Tanderjee in his eloquence made his two fingers flash and flutter before Daniel's eyes.

'Listen and understand, O Mr Tanderjee!' said Daniel, losing patience at last. 'The danger is all mine! I am as a man walking about through many dark doors, whose lintels are low: I may knock my head at any time. I am as the mattress on which you and Mr Gorgonio rest: is the comfort of repose felt by the mattress? No, indeed!'

Daniel was turning away; but Tanderjee came before him and pressed him gently between his two outstretched hands.

'Behold, it is well. I did but try you, my son. We are brothers in this! But there is much to be done, ere the end arrives, and the time is uncertain. We are more than brothers! Behold, I bestow on you my ring.'

'Keep the ring, O worshipper of the Lord of Light,' said Daniel, 'until such time as I give you sufficient gold-dust to equal its value.—But the clock warns it is time that I go to the train.'

'Peace and prosperity go with you, my son,' said Tanderjee. 'Return with speed. I shall await you, as the mistress awaits her lover.'

So these two precious creatures parted; and Daniel went on to meet his late master.

Of the manner in which Daniel spent that evening in London we have had already some hint. Next day he set out with the Sahib Raynor on his fatal travels, taking charge of the familiar tent and other impedimenta which the Sahib insisted on carrying along with him. Daniel did not know when they set out where they were going; but the Sahib on the way to the station bought large maps of the south and west of England, paid a visit to his bank, and then took the train to Sittingbourne. Thence he hired a carriage and horses, and they were driven through the rich orchard-lands of Kent. Daniel found it difficult to carry out his design of showing himself 'a stupid person;' for by this mode of progression it fell to him to do little but sit beside his master and see that he was comfort-

able when they arrived at an hotel for the night. Moreover, his master was unusually silent and self-involved, and demanded little of him; so self-involved and absent-minded, indeed, that he seemed frequently to wake up to wonder why Daniel was in his company. It was only in pitching the tent for the night—the Sahib always contrived to put up at some village inn or out-lying hostel, attached to which was an orchard, or other private and secluded ground, where he could have his peculiar night arrangements—it was only then that Daniel could show himself awkward or stupid; but yet his pains were lost, for Mr Raynor took no note of him.

Thus they drove on from day to day through all that lovely southern land, by the secluded 'dens' and 'hursts' of Kent and Eastern Sussex, where peace and primeval content dozed on lea and furrow, in village and homestead—dozed with the heavy soil and the patient red oxen, slowly dragging through the clay ungainly wagons encrusted with primeval mud; by waving corn-field and breezy down, on into Hampshire and the New Forest, and so onward into the land of Arthurian romance. Everywhere as they passed, the 'swish' of the scythe or the 'burr' of the reaping-machine was in their ear; the reaping was first of hay, then of barley, and then of oats; and so they drove on, as in a panoramic dream, to the greatest reaping of all, when the Sahib himself was cut down. And the farther they went the more did the ravishing sweetness of Nature, the gentleness and docility of beasts, and the patient toil of men and women, impress the mind and soften the heart of Mr Raynor, till one night in the loneliness of his tent his hardness completely crumbled and melted; he was suffused with tenderness as a man is suffused with blood when his heart breaks, and he wept as he thought of his brother and his niece. 'Women are far, far better than men!' he said to himself—unconsciously echoing a saying of his brother's uttered at about the same time; and he turned there and then in his prompt, business-like way, lighted his candle, found paper and a pencil, and wrote to his niece: 'I have been altogether wrong about you and your father. Forgive me. We shall be happy yet together;' and more to the same effect. Then he blew out his light, turned over and went to sleep, at peace with all the world—although it was written that he and his forgiven brother would never be 'happy together' again in this world.

In remarkable, wicked contrast with the blessed influence on Mr Raynor of the peace and sweetness of Nature was their effect on Daniel Trichinopoly. Never was better illustrated the folly of those who would reform the knave and the rascal by turning them into the fields and woods to 'commune with Nature.' Nature never yet made the wicked man turn away from his wickedness. The wide-spread calm and content gave Daniel a certain enjoyment; but yet they only served to make him more vicious, and more impatient to be back at the nefarious work to which he had set his hand. He was wroth that the Sahib Raynor was thus idly carrying him round the country, and it did not in the least appease his wrath that wherever they passed and wherever they stayed, his black face and white turban made him a more important and attractive

person than his master. It chafed him that no blunder, however egregious and however carefully planned, could provoke more than the mildest rebuke—the rebuke as of an indulgent father—and it amazed him, too; for the Sahib Raynor had been wont to be sharp and severe in his discipline. And all the while Daniel could not do other than exhibit his usual suave and gentle demeanour; the which he found to be such a constraint and repression of himself that it was necessary for him to relieve his impatience and rage by dancing round the Sahib's tent in the dark; and then, if the Sahib heard and demanded 'Who is there?' he fell down flat and slid away through the grass like a snake.

So the days and the weeks passed till towards the end of July when they were in Wales. The season—as I have already noted—was hot and dry beyond measure, but yet the Sahib insisted on walking far more in that land of mountain and stream than he had done anywhere else on the tour. He climbed Plinlimmon, and had a nasty fall down a rock; but still he climbed and scrambled in sun and shade, followed by the polite Daniel, perspiring with resentment.

It was on the morning of the hottest day they had yet experienced that they were at Beddgelert preparing for the ascent of Snowdon. The baggage was to be sent on by the high-road to meet the Sahib at Llanberis; and after a sufficient late breakfast, the Sahib, his servant, and a guide set out for the mountain, whose sides were quivering under the haze of heat. Of the three ascents of Snowdon it is well known that that from Beddgelert is the most difficult. It is doubly difficult on a sunny day; for not only is the route long and dangerous, but, since it is directly from the south, the sun beats upon the traveller's spine the whole way, and the rocks throw back the glare and heat on the traveller's face. That day the ascent was terrible; but Mr Raynor would not listen to the guide's suggestion that they should return and try again late in the afternoon or early next morning.

'It is absurd,' said he. 'I have felt hotter suns than this.'

So they laboured on in the terrific heat—now resting and panting in a scrap of shade, and now turning their hot backs to the sun again. About three o'clock, when they had accomplished about three-fourths of the ascent, and when the sun was beating most furiously on them, Mr Raynor suddenly reeled, pitched forward, and fell, as if shot. Both Daniel and the guide knew what had happened: the English sun had stricken down the old Indian traveller. If Daniel knew anything to do then for the recovery of his old master, he did nothing; but he waited by him while the guide ran on to the summit for a litter, and when the litter was brought he helped the guide to carry him—all the while secretly elated that his wanderings were now likely to come to an end. At the hut known as *The Summit Hotel* there chanced to be a doctor. He at once examined Mr Raynor, and ordered that he should be carried down to Llanberis, he himself going with him, Daniel following, docile and attentive.

For the first time since he had returned to England, the traveller lay in a bed in a bedroom—lay completely still, and apparently unconscious.

Daniel sat by him the whole evening and night through, and the doctor looked in every now and then. There was nothing to be done but to watch and wait; and Daniel watched and waited, afraid now, not so much of his old master, as of the shadow of Death. About midnight Daniel sat in silence, meditating in his half-pagan, semi-barbarous way on the strange facts of Life and Death, when the Sahib opened his eyes and looked at him.

'Ah, Sahib!' murmured Daniel, with his hands crossed on his breast. He continued in his Tamil: 'Lord of many travels, and are you indeed turned back again from the door of the other world? Is it a door that is hard to open? *Kāsi*, O master, is formed of but two letters, yet how many hours will it take to reach it! And although a man may go to *Kāsi*, he may miss his way to Heaven! But a good man is fit to sit at meat with the gods. Therefore, O master, be of good cheer.'

Daniel ceased; he perceived on the Sahib's countenance what he interpreted as a demand for attention.

'Ah,' said Daniel, 'and is the tongue stricken, as well as the limbs and the body, O master?'

The Sahib looked pointedly at Daniel, and from him to a small locked valise on a chair, in which Daniel knew the traveller carried his papers, his journal or diary, and other property of an intimately private kind. Daniel laid his hand on the valise with a look of approval from his master, and, still with his approval, took the keys from his master's pocket, selected the proper one, and opened the valise. He took out one thing after another, his master watching him the while, but giving no sign that the thing he wanted was reached until Daniel held in his hand the clasped volume in which the Sahib frequently wrote at night. Daniel held that up with a look of interrogation, and the Sahib gave a murmur of assent, and repeatedly tried to frame a word like 'Isabel.'

'Isabel?' queried Daniel; and the Sahib assented and turned his eyes again on the valise.

Daniel returned to it, and continued to take out one thing and another, until he produced the Sahib's pocket-book. The Sahib again murmured his assent. What did the Sahib wish to be done with it? Something in particular to be taken out of it? Daniel opened it, and his eye and hand first turned to some bank-notes. A third time the Sahib murmured assent, and seemed to frame the words 'Wages' and 'Good.'

'To me, O master?' inquired the astonished Daniel. 'But you have paid me my wages—all except a very little! And here, O master, are altogether five, ten—yea, fifty pounds!'

But the Sahib with insistence seemed to signify that the money was for him. Daniel with an agonised look of inquiry caught the bank-notes to his breast. The Sahib plainly assented to that, and with his eyes signified that he wished the pocket-book now to be returned to the valise. Then Daniel was overwhelmed for the moment with gratitude and shame: the Sahib thought he had behaved well, and the Sahib thus rewarded him! The undeserved reward was too much for even Daniel. The Sahib had closed his eyes, but he opened them again.

'Let me speak, O master,' he cried, 'words of thanks! Your generosity, O master, is as the generosity of Karnan, the greatest of the seven princes! And let me speak again, O master, but this time hear me not! Shut the ears to my words; for they are not good! My heart has nursed anger! I came with vinegar, and, behold, I bring away milk! But the Sahib's heart is noble as that of a king, and he rewards the undeserving! I shall for ever remember the bounty of the Sahib!'

Daniel was silent; for his master had again closed his eyes; a deep flush overspread his face; and he began to breathe very stertorously. Daniel glided swiftly to the door and called the doctor. The doctor came.

'Ah,' said he; 'effusion on the brain! Poor gentleman!—And, I suppose,' he added, looking at Daniel, 'he has endured many fiercer suns than ours.'

PUZZLES FROM A DIAMOND MINE.

THE following paragraph appears in a South African paper: 'At the "Premier" Mine a blast was put in about thirteen feet from the surface, and in the yellow ground some three feet below the limestone formation, which, upon being exploded, brought down, among the displaced diamondiferous soil, a perfect and full-sized ostrich egg. This wonderful discovery is apparently petrified, and evidently hollow, and must have been embedded in the ground for countless years; and, without exception, is the most extraordinary find yet made in the history of diamond-mining.'

This is certainly a very curious discovery, but it does not stand alone, for ostrich eggs more or less perfect have been found both at De Beers and Colesberg Kopje in a fossilised condition. Large pieces of charred fossil wood have also been found from time to time, one of which is described as a portion of a fossil tree, four feet in length, and nearly five feet in circumference. This was found in Dutoitspan Mine, at a depth of eighty feet. At Kimberley there was dug up part of a stem of a tree with a branch attached, at a depth of three hundred and fifty feet from the surface; and a still more singular find was an ant's nest, quite perfect and undisturbed.

Another very remarkable fact is that more than once a broken diamond has been found, and at some distance from it the other portion, the two parts uniting perfectly. This was the case with the wonderful black diamond which forms a portion of the collection of Mr Streeter, the well-known Bond Street jeweller. The diamond referred to, which is said to be the largest black diamond known, was found in South Africa three or four years ago. It was in the form of half a pebble, and has been reduced by cutting from one hundred and sixty-nine and three-quarter carats to sixty-six carats weight; and Mr Streeter has now secured the other half, which was found quite recently.

All these discoveries seem to militate against the generally received opinion as to the origin of these remarkable mines. As is pretty widely known, the diamond mines of South Africa, situated chiefly in Griqualand West, consist of

large depressions, filled with earth, varying in colour from yellow to gray and blue, which is described as a tough dry mud of volcanic origin, sometimes hardened into rock. This mud, or 'blue,' as it is technically called, is enclosed in a basin of rock geologically known as a 'pipe,' which is supposed to be a crater of an extinct volcano, into which the mud has been injected from below. The four principal pipes or mines lie within a radius of a few miles, and are known as Kimberley, De Beers, Dutoitspan, and Bultfontein. The general features of all are alike; in each, the upper part of the soil is yellow, changing, at from fifty to one hundred feet from the surface, to a blue ground of greater density. The diamonds were first discovered in the yellow earth; and when the miners had cleared that out, they imagined they had come to the end of the diamonds; but it was soon found that they were even more abundant in the blue ground; and since that time the mines have been carried down to six and eight hundred feet without any diminution in the yield; on the contrary, the deeper the excavations are carried the better appears the output.

The 'blue,' when excavated, is carried up and spread on the ground, where it lies for months, to be disintegrated by air and water, and is then washed and picked over carefully by hand to find the diamonds. Scattered through the blue earth are not only diamonds, but a great variety of crystals, agates, iron pyrites, and other substances, among which Mr A. A. Anderson, the traveller, believes he found many well-worked flint implements from different depths; and Mr M. E. Barber, as early as 1871, reported the discovery of many worn and perfect flint implements at Colesberg Kopje, in diamondiferous soil from considerable depths, which, if confirmed, would add another to the many puzzles connected with the diamond mines, especially if the volcanic theory is to be maintained. Mr Anderson, however, looks upon the blue ground as occupying the bed of an ancient lake, and that the diamonds, flint implements, fossil wood, and other substances—among which must be included a block of coal, and the ostrich egg alluded to at the beginning of this article—had been brought down by an ancient river, now represented by the Vaal, distant twelve miles or more, the bed of which at various points, and the rocky banks on both sides, are rich in diamonds, the rock of the river-bed being of the same nature as that which encloses the mines. Geologists generally incline to the volcanic theory, but believe that the diamonds are of an earlier date than the upheaval of the mud containing them from an enormous depth. It seems very hard to imagine a volcanic eruption of mud containing all the curious things found in the diamond mines, and especially the undisturbed ant's nest; and when we consider these and the various shapes and characters of the stones, the well-known fact that some have been split, the two halves remaining within a short distance of each other, whilst some have been welded together in an extraordinary manner, the puzzle increases.

The great majority of South African diamonds are amorphous, cloudy, yellowish-looking, soapy-feeling masses, varying in size from a pin's head to a small pebble; but some are perfect octa-

hedrons, white, and very brilliant. These are, of course, the most valuable; and, singular to relate, although these varieties occur in all the mines, yet the general characteristics of the gems, whether dull or brilliant, white or yellow, are sufficiently distinctive to enable an expert to say at a glance from which mine a diamond has come, the same holding good of the Vaal River gems, and of those from Jagersfontein, in the Orange Free State.

Here, then, is another puzzle. How is it that gems so apparently similar, having presumably a common origin and embedded in the same matrix, have acquired varying characteristics? Dame Nature is an adept at hiding her secrets even from the prying eyes of scientists, for although the diamond mines of South Africa have been known and worked for more than twenty years, scarcely anything has been added to our knowledge of the gem itself. The ancients called it Adamant, and we still regard it as the hardest of all things; yet it is easily smashed by a well-directed blow, can be cut in flakes by the dishonest jeweller, and is often found so cracked and flawed as to crumble to pieces untouched; nevertheless, the splinters will pierce the hardest rock, and even when reduced to the finest powder, will cut and polish all other gems.

Until the discovery of the South African mines, all diamonds came from India and Brazil; but it was of course the Indian mines which supplied the Old World; and, strange as it may seem, to our belief in the superiority of modern craftsmen, the jewellers of ancient India, and possibly of Rome also, had discovered the art of engraving and even of piercing the diamond, an art which our modern jewellers find most difficult.

Whatever may be the origin of the diamond, we have proof positive that this world of ours does not possess the monopoly of the lordly gem, for it has been found embedded in a meteorite coming from who can say what distant or disrupted world? Thus widely does Nature scatter her precious things; and we, who fondly believe she has favoured our little world above others, are informed by this messenger from space, that the things we covet are sown broadcast where, now at all events, there are no hands to delve for them and no eyes to revel in their beauty. Thousands, perhaps millions of years, the diamond has been in existence, yet its origin is still a mystery. Pure carbon, chemists call it, but in what alembic it is distilled they know not. Embedded in mud, it remains undefiled; yet sometimes it will be found tinted by some chemical process so as to become pink, blue, yellow, and even black; but it always remains a diamond, not to be confounded with the commoner crystals which often bear it company. In the Vaal River diggings it would seem to have a constant companion in a curiously streaked pebble, known as the 'banddoom,' which, when a digger finds, he knows that diamonds are near. In these diggings the gems are not found in 'blue' ground, as at Kimberley, but sometimes at a depth of from twenty to seventy feet in yellow ground, and under immense boulders, although often in shallow beds of fine red sand or under a hard crust of lime. The puzzle here, again, is to know how all these gems came there. In this case there is no question of upheaval from an unknown depth;

they would appear to be water-borne, and the mountains of the Drakensberg, from which the river takes its rise, might naturally be looked upon as their original home; but hitherto none have been found near the source of the river, and none beyond a certain point of its course, although they may be unearthed for a distance of seventy miles along its banks; and almost invariably, if found at one spot, they may be looked for immediately opposite on the other side of the river; so that geologists incline to the belief that they have been formed *in situ*—but how, when, and by what process, remain among the unsolved problems of science.

THE RED-HOT NEEDLE.

CHAPTER III.

AMBROSE BURDON arrived in England in the middle of September, made his headquarters at a quiet boarding-house in one of the squares off Holborn, and at once hastened to call upon his cousin Ruth. The girl was astonished to find him in good spirits; and as he made no allusion to the events which had necessitated his return home, of course she did not touch upon the subject. Ruth and her aunts were delighted with him, for men of the world rarely broke in upon the solitude of their humble North London home, and Ambrose Burdon could play an agreeable, sociable part as well as any man, when he chose. As cigars were necessities of Burdon's life, and as Ruth's aunts abominated the scent of the weed, he and Ruth went out for a stroll together, and after an hour, during which time her cousin spoke pathetically of the bad luck which had overtaken him, and heartily of the good luck which had befallen her, she arrived at the conclusion that next to her own Jack, her cousin Ambrose was the nicest of men.

As for his resemblance to Felling, in the uncertain light of fading day, it was absolutely ridiculous, and more than once she had to look hard at him to persuade herself that it was he, and not Jack, who was walking beside her. That evening she went to meet Jack with her cousin. The greeting between the two men was hearty in the extreme; and at the grave risk of mortally offending her rigid aunts, Ruth dined with them at a fashionable West End restaurant, and only parted with them at her door as the clocks were striking midnight.

The two men walked home together; and the next evening Jack Felling told Ruth that all his original prejudice against Burdon was dispelled, and that he was really a first-rate fellow.

In a week's time Burdon came before the Directors of the Pacific Bank. The meeting was a long one. Burdon minutely explained all the circumstances connected with the Comptroller's defalcations, and made out an excellent case for himself; but an example had to be made in the interests of the shareholders, and Ambrose Burdon received the intimation that six months' salary would be paid him, and that he henceforth ceased to be an officer of the bank. He bowed, and left the room.

September gave way to October, October waned into November. During this time the intercourse

between Ruth Tunstall, Jack Felling, and Ambrose Burdon was constant. They made excursions together; they visited places of public amusement together, and they frequently dined together. Jack Felling began to entertain so sincere a regard for Burdon, that he hardly regarded him as an intruder upon the sacred privacy of love-making, and Burdon had tact enough to know at once when three was no company, and never spoiled the evening tête-à-tête which the lovers still enjoyed.

It was now no secret that Ruth was an heiress, and so her engagement to Jack Felling was no longer withheld from the knowledge of her aunts; and in the bank it was known that at the New Year the headship of the Open Bill Department would be vacant. The marriage was arranged to take place in March; and already the young couple, always assisted by Ambrose Burdon, had plunged into the difficult and disappointing work of house-choosing. Indeed, Ambrose Burdon helped Ruth even more than did Jack, for his time was his own, and Jack of course was tied to the City, except upon Saturday afternoons. So little of a trouble did Burdon make of what had happened to him, that it was agreed that he must have saved and made money during his service in the East. At any rate, he said nothing about seeking for fresh employment: he dressed well, smoked good cigars, made free use of hansom, and in five cases out of six insisted upon being the host at the little dinners which the trio enjoyed together. All this he could easily do upon the six months' salary awarded him by the bank; but Ambrose Burdon was not the man to take no thought for the morrow.

So all went on smoothly and smilingly until the third week in November. Then the sunshine was blotted by a great and terrible cloud. Upon arrival at his lodgings one afternoon, Jack Felling found a telegram awaiting him. He tore it open, and read that Ruth had suddenly been seized with the symptoms of what was called influenza. He immediately hurried off to Dalston. The aunts met him with grave faces, and told him that although there were certain symptoms of the prevalent epidemic, such as the external feverishness and the internal chilliness, Ruth did not complain of the other symptoms usually present, but of a sharp, biting pain inside, which was quite foreign to the common malady. Moreover, she had been seized quite suddenly, and without any premonitory cold in the head.

Jack waited until the doctor came, and with him Ambrose Burdon. Jack had an unaccountable dislike and distrust of medical men, and when Dr Soutter would say nothing and had no opinion to offer, growled that it was because he knew nothing about it.

'Do you mean to say, doctor,' said the young man, 'that you have no name to give to this attack?'

'I do mean to say so,' replied the doctor. 'All I can say is that there are grave symptoms which I cannot account for, and that unless they disappear before my treatment, I must call in a second opinion to share the responsibility of a case the like of which I have never known during an experience of thirty years.'

The next day there was no marked increase of the illness, but the symptoms for which the

doctor could not account remained. Poor Ruth suffered continual pain; but she bore it as often the most fragile of women can bear pain, her chief concern being for Jack, whose name was constantly on her lips.

On the third day she was, if not worse, at any rate so much the same that it was decided to call in a second opinion. The new doctor endorsed what Soutter had said, and was utterly at a loss to account for the particular symptoms which were giving the patient so much trouble. Accidental poisoning was suggested; but the stomach pump and the usual tests failed to reveal the smallest trace of poison; and Ruth was accustomed to live so simply, that she could describe exactly what she had eaten and drunk for a week previously.

At the end of seven days she had wasted to but a shadow of her former self. The young men were constantly in attendance, Ambrose Burdon by day, Jack Felling by night, vying with each other in their devotion to the poor girl; and the Eastern acquaintances of the ex-bank Manager would have almost doubted their senses could they have seen with what tact and readiness the hard, unsympathetic man of business settled to the work of the sick-room. It was he who brought the daintiest flowers and the most tempting fruit. It was he who relieved the nurse, who went for the doctor, who performed errands, and who spoke words of comfort to the poor, frightened aunts, and lightened their sinking hearts with his quiet, cheerful talk.

'Old fellow,' said Jack Felling to him one evening, 'I'll never forget this kindness of yours; and if it should please God to spare my poor darling to me, our home shall be yours whenever you please.'

'Don't talk of thanks,' replied Burdon; 'but go out for a spin, or you'll break down. I'll stop here till you come back.' So Jack Felling, instead of relieving Burdon, went out, sorely against his will, and only in obedience to the conviction that seven nights' consecutive watching was beginning to tell upon him, and that the news of a break-down on his part would add to Ruth's trouble. He walked straight away for the old trysting-place at the City churchyard. It was getting dusk when he started, and by the time he reached Cannon Street it was almost dark. He turned down into the quiet of Upper Thames Street, and was on the point of ascending the steps leading up to the garden, when he felt a light touch on his arm. Turning round, he beheld a squat little figure, which at first seemed to be all hat and greatcoat.

'Well, my man,' he said, 'what is it?'

'Good-evening, sir; I welly glad to see you,' was the reply.

'I don't know who you are,' said Jack. 'What do you want?'

'You no sabby my!' exclaimed the little man, and, turning his face towards the gas-lamp, showed the grinning features of an unmistakable Chinaman. 'Now you sabby my!—you sabby Ah Why—Ah Why—and you sabby welly well that Led-hot Needle!'

'Ah Why!—Led-hot Needle! What the deuce are you jabbering about?'

'Maskee, sir, maskee! Ah Why sabby you, if you no sabby Ah Why,' said the Chinaman.

In a moment it flashed across Jack's mind that he was being mistaken for Ambrose Burdon, and that this man could be no other than the defaulting Comprador after whom such fruitless search had been made. He was on the point of discovering himself to Ah Why, when it occurred to him that this Mr Ah Why seemed to be upon extraordinarily familiar terms with one whom he had caused to be turned out of the bank's service; that he was hardly playing the part of a fugitive from justice in general, and from an injured man in particular, and that he must be in London with some object.

So he determined to dissemble for a while. 'Oh! You're Ah Why the Comprador!' he said. 'Well! what on earth are you doing in London?'

'I wantchee see you, sir,' replied the Chinaman. 'That police mens have makee hunt me all sides—Hong-kong, Singapore, Penang—no side be long safe. I read that money offered for me by the bank all sides. Then I go that Manila side: I makee lose allo my money, and I come to England as cook's mate in a ship.'

'Serve you right! And now I suppose you want me to help you?'

'Yes, sir. You 'member that Led-hot Needle?'

'What!'

'That Led-hot Needle.'

'What do you mean? Speak plainly. What the dickens do I know about a Led-hot Needle?'

'Ah! I tink you no wantchee 'member it, sir—you no wantchee 'member it; here he sank his voice to a whisper. 'Pelaps that Led-hot Needle have makee you lich man, and you no likee 'member it.'

There was an almost diabolical twinkle in the bead-like eyes of the Chinaman as he said this. Jack was thoroughly puzzled; but from what he could make of a language to which he was unaccustomed, it seemed to him that there had been some sort of private understanding between Ambrose Burdon and his Comprador. So he resolved to keep on his mask.

'Really, Ah Why,' he said, 'my memory must have been affected by that affair at the bank. What did I want this Red-hot Needle for? I quite forget.'

'Hush!' said the Chinaman fearfully. 'Man no talkee about it loud. That day when you makee find out about the forged cheques, you talkee my: "Ah Why, you sabby one thing can makee my lich man. I mean that Led-hot Needle. Supposee you get my that Led-hot Needle, I let you get away that China side before that policeman catehee you." Now you 'member?'

'Yes, yes; now I remember!' replied Jack eagerly. 'Well?'

'Well, I give you one pieceny chit to my cousin, Dr Quang Ti, and he give you that Led-hot Needle, and now I can secure you be long lich man.'

'That fool Burdon's been dabbling in charms, that's evident,' thought Jack. Then he said aloud: 'Well, I can't say that I am a rich man.'

'No!' exclaimed Ah Why. 'Pelaps you not makee usee it all light. I talkee you, Mr Burdon, that Led-hot Needle never miss. Some time it take one moon, sometime two moon, sometime tlee moon—but it never miss.'

'Then how is it you are not rich?' asked Jack.

'Oh! that belong other thing,' replied Ah Why. 'Chinaman no makee usee welly often. Chinaman dare not. Beside, I have no piecay man or woman to makee my lich. Supposee I have one piecay welly lich uncle, and he can makee my lich, and he no makee, then pelaps'—

'Well,' said Jack, 'here's half-a-sovereign for you. Where can I find you if I want you?'

'Sailor-man Home, Well Street,' replied Ah Why. 'Tank you, sir, welly much. I hope I see you again.' So saying he saluted, and disappeared in the darkness.

It would be difficult to describe the state of mind in which Jack found himself after this interview with the ex-Comprador of the Pacific Bank; for, from what the latter had said in the fullness of his belief that he was talking to his late Manager, it was clear to Jack Felling that this man, Ambrose Burdon, who had won his heart by his attention to poor Ruth, had been criminally connected with the robbery. The theory he patched together as he walked on through the dark streets was this: He knew Ambrose Burdon to be a paradox—a keen, clever business man, and yet superstitious to an unusual degree in a practical age. It was clear that he had lost money, probably through speculations in which he and the Comprador had worked together—a by no means uncommon kind of partnership in the Far East. Matters must have come to a desperate pass, and an arrangement had evidently been made of mutual advantage to both parties: the Manager to screen the Comprador from the consequences of his speculations; the Comprador to put the Englishman in possession of the means of becoming rich—means veiled under the mystic name of the Red-hot Needle.

Of the nature of this strangely titled key to wealth Jack Felling of course could form no idea. He scouted as ridiculous and impossible the notion of a century-end business man, even if he was superstitious in such matters as sitting down thirteen to table, passing under ladders, crossing knives, spilling salt, and so forth, believing in the magic influence of anything like the Philosopher's Stone; but he saw in the name of Red-hot Needle the symbol of a power, and, from the hushed way in which Ah Why spoke of it, a terrible power. Jack Felling, who was brought constantly in contact with men who had passed long years in China, of course had picked up a large fund of various information concerning that country, and about one subject in particular, the Secret Societies, he was well conversant. Now, it struck him that, in a desperate plight, Ambrose Burdon might have put himself in communication, through Ah Why, with one of these societies, the chief object of which was to levy blackmail on the rich, and that the talisman, or passkey, had been this so-called Red-hot Needle; and he was supported in his notion that Burdon had done this, and that he had done it with success, by the strangely composed manner in which he had accepted his dismissal from the bank, and by his evidently easy pecuniary position.

So interested and absorbed had Jack Felling become in the extraordinary discoveries of the

evening, that he, for the time being, almost forgot about his poor suffering darling at Dalston; so, pulling himself out of his reverie, he walked sharply to the Broad Street Station. There was a man opposite to Jack in the railway carriage who was reading an evening paper. As he held the sheet so that one side of it was fully displayed, Jack found himself trying to spell out the items of news in the dim light. Suddenly his eyes became riveted on a paragraph headed: 'Strange Affair in Paris. The Chinaman and the Russian General.' So eagerly did he read it, that the owner of the paper, noticing him, asked him if he would like to see it.

Jack stammered out an apology for his rudeness, but declined the offer. He had read in that short paragraph what made him feel sick and faint, what made him fume at each stoppage of the train, what made him leap from the carriage when it was in swift movement at Dalston Station, fall heavily, pick himself up unconscious of bruise or sprain, rush past the ticket collector, and speed as he had never sped for many a day straight to the house of sickness.

That paragraph had given him a clue about the Red-hot Needle.

ARMY BAKERY.

THE provisioning of an Army is, of course, a matter of primary importance, and it is imperative that the arrangements for so doing should be such that, in whatever circumstances the army may be placed, and no matter where it may be located, it may never be without a sufficient supply. A separate branch of the service, the Commissariat Department, is set apart to attend to these arrangements entirely; and with them depends, to a great extent, the efficiency of an army when in the field, as well as its health and comfort when at home. This department is responsible that the supply of provisions both for men and horses is sufficient and regular, and also that these provisions are sound and of good quality; and it may be of interest to know how this is carried out. It is generally known that the soldier is provided with rations to the amount of one pound of bread and three-quarters of a pound of meat per day. We purpose here to treat of the bread alone.

In the first place, it is only at such stations as Aldershot that the bread is made by the Commissariat Department. At out-stations, where the number of troops to be supplied is not great, bread is issued by contract. These contracts are made by the Commissariat with such stipulations as the following: That bread is not to be issued before twenty-four hours or later than thirty-six hours after baking, except the bread for prisons, which is not to be issued before thirty-six hours after baking—in order that the prisoners may have it stale. That the loaves are to weigh two pounds each when issued. Such contracts are made for six months; but they can be broken by giving one month's notice, or, in case of insolvency or bribery, immediately.

When, however, the number of troops in a station is considerable, the bread is made by the Commissariat. In the British army, bread is made entirely from wheat flour, which is much

the best for the purpose, as rye flour—the only other which contains gluten of a sufficiently adhesive nature to allow of the bread rising well—is dark in colour and bitter to the taste. The percentage of gluten varies according to the different kinds of wheat, the red or hard wheat containing considerably more than the soft or white wheat. Gluten is the substance in flour which forms the coating of the cavities in well-risen bread—that is to say, by holding the carbonic acid gas given off from the yeast or other ferment, the gluten causes the bread to rise. Gluten is the muscle-making property of bread, while the starch is the fat-forming portion. The best proportion of gluten for bread-making purposes is found to be from twelve to fifteen per cent.

Samples of every quantity of flour brought in are carefully examined before they are accepted. There are two qualities of flour used in the service: one quality called 'Seconds,' which is used for the ordinary ration bread; and another quality called 'Firsts,' which is used for the bread known as 'Hospital bread.' Hospital flour, or Firsts, should be white in colour; while the ration flour or Seconds has a yellowish tint.

Sometimes the flour brought in is adulterated with alum or copper, which are used to make old or fermented flour appear of good quality. Chalk and plaster of Paris are also sometimes used. The presence of these can be detected by simple chemical tests.

We may now presume that we have a supply of flour of good quality in the bakery, and also a store of malt. At this point the work of the Commissariat bakers usually begins, for, as the process of malt-making is lengthy, it is more convenient and as cheap to get it by contract. The first process is to make the yeast. For this purpose, hops are used, in order to prevent the yeast turning sour. Hops for the purpose of making yeast should be fresh; indeed, it is laid down in the contract that 'they shall be of this or last year's growth.'

The yeast most generally made use of in the service is what is known as 'Patent or Hop Yeast.' Taking one thousand pounds of flour as the amount which is to be made into bread, three gallons of this yeast is required, which is made in the following manner: Three pounds of crushed malt are steeped in soft water and heated up to a temperature of one hundred and seventy degrees in winter, or one hundred and forty-five degrees in summer. It is then well stirred up, covered over, and left to stand for an hour and a half. At the same time two ounces of hops are simmered in a caldron in four and a half gallons of water for an hour and a half at a temperature of two hundred degrees. At the end of this time the fire is withdrawn and the liquor allowed to cool down to one hundred and eighty degrees in winter, or one hundred and fifty-five degrees in summer, when it is strained through a sieve into the malt liquor. The two liquors are then well stirred, covered with a cloth, and left to stand for ten hours. At the end of that time the mixture is strained through a sieve into a clean tub; four ounces of sugar are laid on the sieve, and half a gallon of old yeast is poured through this into the mixture. It is then stirred again,

covered, and left to ferment for ten hours. During fermentation, a brown and white froth forms on the surface, and this should be removed.

Yeast is greatly affected by thunder, which turns it sour. To guard against this, in thundery weather it is covered up well, and iron rods are placed outside the tubs, to conduct away the electricity. If the yeast is affected, one pound of sugar is added to every seven gallons. It is usual when making yeast in thundery weather to add two ounces of ginger, which prevents it from being affected.

The next process is to make what is termed a 'sponge'—that is to say, a certain proportion of the flour to be made into bread is set aside in the trough and the yeast mixed with it. There are three sponges used—the quarter, half, and three-quarter sponges. Taking again one thousand pounds of flour as the amount to be converted into bread, two hundred and fifty, five hundred, or seven hundred and fifty pounds, according to the size of the sponge to be used, are set aside, and the whole three gallons of yeast are mixed with it. The yeast acts quicker upon the small quantity than on the large, and thus small sponges are used in winter, large sponges in summer.

The sponge being mixed, carbonic acid gas begins to form, and raises the sponge until it bursts through it, when it sinks down again. This is termed the 'first drop.' The same process is repeated, and we have the 'second drop.' The sponge is then broken up; nine to fifteen pounds of salt, dissolved in about fifty gallons of water, are added, and the remainder of the flour is gradually kneaded in. After the first kneading, which lasts about half an hour, the dough is left to stand for three or four hours, when it rises or 'gives proof.' It is then beaten down, kneaded again, and left to rise again for an hour. The dough is now taken out of the trough, placed on the moulding-table, cut up, and scaled. Allowance is made for loss of weight in and after baking, so that a two-pound loaf for issue the next day is scaled at two pounds three and a half ounces. On Saturdays, when baking is done for the following Monday as well as Sunday, the two-pound loaves for issue on Monday are scaled at two pounds five ounces. After scaling, the lumps are moulded, and left on the table for a little while to expand, which they do to about double their size. They are then placed in the oven and baked. When they are sufficiently baked—that is, when the crumb on pressure by the hand will spring back to its original position—they are withdrawn. The two-pound loaves require to be baked about an hour and a quarter. The bread is now carried from the bakehouse and stored in the storehouse. Next day, it is drawn out and placed in Commissariat wagons, in which it is taken round to the various regiments and issued according to the amount required by each regiment. Here, again, it is issued under regimental arrangements to the men; a two-pound loaf between two men for the day.

There are two kinds of ovens used in the Commissariat bakeries—the brick oven and the steam oven. In the first-named oven a fire is

made in communication with the interior. When the temperature within has reached five hundred and sixty degrees, the fire is removed and the bread placed in the oven. Between each batch of bread the heat of the oven has to be raised again. The time required for the first heating is three hours; for the subsequent heatings, one hour. The steam oven is heated from a furnace in rear by means of steam-pipes underneath. The proper temperature for this oven is four hundred and seventy degrees. This oven can be kept at the same temperature always; thus, as soon as one batch of bread is taken out, another one is put in. The time required to heat the oven in the first instance is five hours. The advantage of this oven over the brick one will be readily seen as regards time. But beyond this, the floor of the steam oven being of sheet-iron lasts much longer than the brick floor of the other. Thirdly, it requires less fuel, and consequently entails less expense.

As regards the management of a bakery, the bakers are classified according to the kind of work they do. They are all under the orders of the Master Baker, and work in such a manner and for such a time as may be necessary. The Master Baker superintends in the bakery, keeps an account of the materials expended, and is responsible for the correctness both in weight and quality of things which he receives. It is his duty at once to report any breach of contract. A foreman is in charge of each oven, and is responsible for any bread spoilt in his oven. The bread-store keeper has to keep an account of the bread produced by each foreman, and report to the Master Baker upon any which is burnt or badly baked. He is also responsible for the cleanliness of the bread-store and of the insides of the bread wagons.

JUMPER ADAMS.

'THERE'LL be thunder and blazes in the diggin's when Peaceful Sam comes back an' finds 'is claim jumped,' observed Hairy Tom sagely to the crowd of loafers assembled in the bar of the 'Roaring Buster,' the first and by far the largest of the three public-houses that had sprung up like mushrooms at the recently discovered Merryberg gold-field; and, one and all, the listeners nodded their heads knowingly and agreed with the spokesman.

The first shock of astonishment had given way to a feeling of excitement, which pervaded the whole community, and became so intense that one by one the diggers had abandoned their work and collected in groups to discuss the situation and speculate upon the impending storm. Upon one man only had the general contagion apparently no effect; and yet, strange to say, he alone was the cause of the disturbance. When the others dropped their tools, he continued to hammer serenely away with his pick at the bank of the creek, humming the while a merry tune. No frown of anxiety creased his deep-bronzed brow, and no tremor of nervousness weakened the blows of his tool.

To describe the situation we must go back a little. When gold was first discovered at the Merryberg Fields, a month or two previously,

a 'rush,' in a small way, set in, and diggers from all parts of Queensland quickly congregated upon the scene like vultures round a carcass. In the first batch of arrivals was one Samuel Stoner, a big, hulking bully, with the strength of an ox, and the profanity of a carrier, who, on account of his fighting propensities, was facetiously dubbed 'Peaceful Sam,' a name which ever afterwards clung to him, and by which alone he soon came to be known. Having had some previous experience in prospecting, he was not slow in staking out the likeliest claim on the river and getting to work. Gold there was in his claim without a doubt, although at first he found no nuggets, and he worked at it like a nigger from early morning till late at night; and when he was on the work, there was nobody who could hold a pick with him. After two months of incessant toil, Peaceful Sam had amassed one hundred and sixty ounces of the precious metal. This would yield him something between five and six hundred pounds, quite sufficient to afford him a week's good spree, so a right royal spree he determined to have. Accordingly, he bought a horse, packed up his gold in a canvas bag, which he slung across the pommel of his saddle, and set out for Rockhampton, some sixty miles distant, with the avowed intention of banking his gold and then 'knocking down his cheque'—that is, the cheque would be handed whole to the landlord of some hotel or saloon, who would supply his guest and those whom he cared to treat with liquor until the amount was exhausted—or was supposed to be (which was not always the same thing).

In the meantime, Peaceful Sam had, by means of incessant bullying and the use of the most bloodthirsty threats, constituted himself a sort of 'cock of the walk,' and his name was a terror in the community; so much so, in fact, that upon leaving for Rockhampton, he not only made no provision for preserving the title to his claim, but openly dared anybody to appropriate, or 'jump' it, during his absence.

Upon the tenth day after he had left, a stranger appeared at Merryberg with a pick and shovel and very little else. The new-comer was a wiry but youthful-looking man, slightly below the middle height, whose beardless face made him perhaps appear younger than he really was. At the outside he could not have been more than thirty; but he had a shrewd look in his keen eyes, and a firm cut about the mouth and chin that spoke of indomitable pluck and set determination. He said his name was Adams. In a very business-like manner he proceeded at once to rig up a shanty, and the same night saw him housed beneath his own somewhat frail roof. The next morning he was stirring early, and, pipe in mouth, sauntered leisurely through the diggings. By-and-by he came to Peaceful Sam's vacant claim, and examined it with a critical eye, taking up a handful of soil and sifting it in his palm. Then he turned to the man who was working the next claim and inquired how it was that this one was vacant. The man, who happened to be none other than Hairy Tom, willingly supplied the asked-for information, and further descanted at large upon the character of the late tenant, and the probable treatment anybody would receive who had the hardihood to jump the claim. Other diggers came up and corroborated his statements.

'What's the name o' this 'ere terror?' asked the young man coolly.

'Peaceful Sam.'

'Ain't he got another name?'

'Stoner, I b'lieve,' replied Hairy Tom.

'Well, then,' went on the intrepid Adams, 'when Mister Stoner comes back, 'e can start prospectin' agen. There's gold 'ere, an' Adams is goin' to work it. An' if Peaceful Sam works in this claim agen, 'e works for me.'

At these words the little knot of listeners stared at one another aghast, and then tried to dissuade the young man from carrying out his design. But all their efforts only served to strengthen his determination.

'E'll chaw yer up,' remarked Hairy Tom; 'e's twice as big as you. There ain't a man in the diggin's durst tackle 'im.'

'Then 'e'll find a pretty tough bit to chaw at,' replied Adams nonchalantly.

'Or, mebbe, 'e'll cleave yer skull with 'is shovel,' hazarded another.

To which the doughty Adams quietly responded: 'If 'e don't get 'is own split open first.—Look 'ere, now, mates! I've only got five pounds in the world; but I'll lay that w' any of yer, even money, that I stick to the claim; an' Peaceful Sam neither chaws me up nor splits my skull open; an' if you'll lay me two to one, I'll jump 'is bloomin' shanty too!'

The latter offer was quickly taken; Stoner's shanty was pointed out to the daring stranger, who at once took possession, after removing his few belongings to it, and then coolly and methodically set to work with pick and shovel in the deserted claim.

Eleven days had already passed since Peaceful Sam's departure to Rockhampton, and he might now be expected back at any hour. Just after sunset, that very night, when the bar of the 'Roaring Buster' was crammed with diggers, all still eagerly discussing the man they now referred to as 'Jumper' Adams, a bullock-wagon drove into the diggings and pulled up at the door of the public-house. At the front of the wagon sat Stoner, looking frightfully seedy and bilious. He had successfully knocked down his cheque, and had returned for another spell of work. As the bully entered the bar, an embarrassed hush fell upon the expectant crowd. Stoner looked from one to another inquiringly, but nobody cared to fire the train. Words of explanation hovered on the tip of many a tongue, but, reckless roughs as they were, they felt a sort of admiration for Jumper Adams's pluck, while at the same time they had no great love for Peaceful Sam, and each man was loth to set the bully at the interloper, although he knew that sooner or later the encounter must come off.

Stoner glanced savagely round, and then seizing a little man who stood near by the shoulder, fiercely demanded, embellishing his request with a few choice ornamental oaths: 'Wot's up? Out w' it, yer flamin' crow-bait!'

'A stranger's come an' jumped yer claim,' the little man jerked out spasmodically.

Everybody waited breathlessly to hear the first explosion; but for a time everybody was disappointed. Never in all his chequered career had Peaceful Sam received such a staggerer as this. The shock was more than he was prepared

for. The bare idea of anybody daring to jump his claim! He could hardly grasp it, and he reeled back helplessly against the men who stood behind him. He even forgot to swear! The sight of the bully being so taken aback was so novel, that a broad grin appeared upon more than one swarthy visage, and an audible titter arose upon the outskirts of the crowd. Before Stoner could recover his composure, a voice from near the door piped out: 'An' 'e's jumped yer shanty too!'

The second shock was quite as severe as the first had been—if not more so—and for a few seconds Stoner glared vacantly around in silence. It was the ominous calm before the breaking of the storm, and ere any of the loafers volunteered any further intelligence, Peaceful Sam found his tongue and gave vent to a perfect avalanche of expletives. Never once did he falter; and in its way, his effort was a most finished performance.

'Where is the thieving snatcher, an' I'll go an' cut 'is liver out?' he roared passionately, with flashing eyes, bringing down his fist heavily on the counter.

'I seed 'im turnin' inter yer shanty when 'e knocked off work a bit since,' replied one.

Peaceful Sam made for the door, and emerged into the fast gathering night, showering curses around him, while the crowd followed close at his heels to witness the fun, and, if necessary, to prevent Jumper Adams from being killed outright.

Meanwhile, the object of the bully's wrath was peacefully unconscious of what was going on up at the 'Roaring Buster.' As the light began to fail, he had knocked off work for the day, and adjourned to the shanty, where he was now comfortably settled on an empty keg with a billy of tea and a damper before him. Calmly indifferent to the fate that was supposed to be hanging over him, he applied himself with keen appetite to the creature-comforts, and had almost emptied his billy, when the tramp of many feet broke in upon him through the bark walls of his shelter. Above the surging din of the advancing crowd he could distinctly hear the infuriated Stoner's sanguinary threats, and a curious smile played for a moment on Jumper Adams's shrewd features as he paused and listened intently. Then the smile faded, and he resumed his usual nonchalant air as he once more lifted the tin vessel to his lips and drained off the last drops from it. As he put down the empty billy on the cask that did duty for a table, the door of the shanty was burst suddenly open, and Peaceful Sam crossed the threshold, announcing his arrival with a specimen of his most belligerent oratory; while the diggers crowded round the door, hustling each other roughly in their eagerness to obtain a position from which they could watch the issue of events.

Apparently the curses had no effect upon Jumper Adams, for he quietly remained seated on his keg, and did not even take the trouble to raise his head until Stoner had advanced with clenched fist to the middle of the little room. Then—and not until then—did the lesser man, without rising, coolly turn his dark, determined eyes full on the bully, and very calmly and very deliberately he said: 'Sam Stoner, drop it! For close on five years I've followed your trail

from gold-field to gold-field and from rush to rush; from Sandhurst to Ballarat, from Gympie to Charters Towers, and from Canoona to Merryberg. You know what there is atween you and me; and now I've come up with you, you can bet your soul and swag, you don't shake me off.'

Whether it was the speaker's words or the sight of his face that wrought the electrical change in Peaceful Sam's demeanour, the spectators could not determine; but certain it was that the two shocks he had received at the 'Roaring Buster' were mere flea-bites to this. This was a clean knock-down blow, which instantaneously crushed every vestige of fight out of the braggart. His upraised fist fell listlessly by his side, his jaw dropped, and his eyes fairly bulged from his sallow cheeks as he stood for a second or two rooted to the spot before dropping limply on to a log that served for a seat. It was very evident that Jumper Adams stood in no danger either of being 'chawed up' or of having his skull split open. For a few minutes he kept his eyes steadily on the cowed bully; then he turned to the spectators, and with a grim smile of satisfaction on his face, said: 'You can leave us now, mates; there ain't goin' ter be no pantermime performance to-night, an' Peaceful Sam an' me 'as a bit o' business to talk over together.'

So the mystified diggers returned to the 'Roaring Buster' to argue upon the inexplicable turn events had taken, leaving the discomfited Stoner and the triumphant Adams to enjoy each other's society undisturbed. What passed that night in the shanty nobody knew; but soon after sunrise the following morning, Peaceful Sam, with a sullen frown on his face, was noticed to be at work in his old claim under the personal supervision of Jumper Adams, who did not forget, by the way, promptly to collect the amount of his wager. What was the nature of the influence that Adams exerted over the former bully—now bully no longer—none of the other diggers could find out, and very soon they gave up trying to. From that day the two worked steadily together, Stoner doing the digging and heavy work, while Adams attended to the washing and lighter jobs. There were no more sprees—no more cheques to be knocked down for Peaceful Sam, for his new master was a strict disciplinarian, and kept the big man's nose diligently to the grindstone. Early and late, week in and week out, the thud of the pick and the creak of the cradle could be heard issuing from Adams's claim, and regularly twice a month a consignment of gold was sent down to the bank at Rockhampton.

Soon it began to be whispered about the diggings that some big nuggets had been found in Adams's claim; but how far the rumour was correct, Merryberg never knew, for the proprietor was singularly close upon business matters. Still, it was generally understood that he was making money fast, though how quickly was entirely a matter of conjecture. Perhaps Hairy Tom, who worked the adjoining claim, was the most competent of the outsiders to form an opinion, for he himself was doing remarkably well, although he was working single-handed, and his claim was, he judged, vastly inferior to his neighbour's.

As for Peaceful Sam, he at first submitted to the new arrangement with a very bad grace, and it was the unanimous opinion of the frequen-

ters of the 'Roaring Buster' that, had his taskmaster's hold upon him—whatever it was—been less powerful, he would speedily have kicked over the traces. By-and-by his sulky demeanour gave way to an air of hopeless resignation, which lasted for twelve months or so. At the end of that time he began to have occasional intervals of dismal cheerfulness, and once he was heard to laugh. It was a depressing, mournful sort of a laugh, it is true; yet it was a laugh, and Merryberg marvelled. But Peaceful Sam's spirit was broken. He had lost that fluency of language that had at one time been the admiration of all who heard him, and his fame as a rowdy had long since sunk into oblivion.

But Jumper Adams never changed. He remained the same shrewd, level-headed fellow he was the first day he appeared upon the scene right up to the very day upon which he suddenly left Merryberg, dragging Peaceful Sam with him like a chained hound. Nobody but himself—and, perhaps, Stoner—was aware of his intentions; and a few hours afterwards the news that he had sold his claim and left Merryberg for good came like a thunder-clap upon the diggings.

After another year of digging, and 'cradling,' and 'panning-off,' the gold in Hairy Tom's claim suddenly gave out, and he, too, left Merryberg. Now Hairy Tom was by no means the unmitigated fool that the Australian gold-seeker generally develops into. Occasionally he had varied the tedium of constant digging with a few days' spree; but he had never systematically knocked down his cheque whenever he had a hundred or two to his credit, and thus it happened that at the time his claim was played out he had a considerable balance lying in the bank at Rockhampton. With this he determined to quit the gold-fields and settle down. Of course his first thoughts turned to the Old Country, and nothing would do but he must come to England. Accordingly, he made his arrangements. A few weeks later the good ship *Calabar* landed him at Plymouth, and in due time the mail-train deposited him at Paddington.

In the course of his sight-seeing rambles about the metropolis he wandered as far as Rotten Row one bright afternoon in May, and stood watching the endless stream of gay equipages that flowed before him, bearing along the rank and fashion of London. He had not stood many minutes when his eyes suddenly became riveted upon a well-appointed landau, drawn by a pair of spirited grays, which was approaching. It was not the vehicle itself that attracted his attention, neither was it the well-matched grays. He had eyes only for the figure of a big man with a white hat, a light dust-coat, and a flaming scarlet tie, who occupied the greater portion of the principal seat—a man with the features of Peaceful Sam.

'Say, pard,' he began, familiarly digging a gentleman who stood near in the ribs, 'can you tell me whose that kerridge is?'

'The one with the grays?' returned the gentleman good-humouredly.

'Yes.'

'That is Mr Stoner's, the wealthy Australian—or perhaps I ought to say Mrs Stoner's.'

'Mrs Stoner's!' repeated Hairy Tom.

'Yes—the lady in it.'

The vehicle being now quite close to where he

stood, Hairy Tom turned his attention to the second and only other occupant of it, whom he had not previously noticed, being too intent upon gazing at Peaceful Sam's familiar face. There was something about the lady which seemed strangely familiar to him, yet it did not at first occur to him where he had seen her before. He thought hard for a moment. Then a gleam of the truth broke in upon him, and he gave vent to a long low whistle as the carriage passed and disappeared in the crowd.

'You have seen Mrs Stoner before, eh?' queried the gentleman, watching him with an amused smile.

'Seed 'er afore?' he replied; 'well—yes, only the last time I seed 'er they didn't call 'er Mrs Stoner—she was Jumper Adams.'

GREEK-FIRE.

THE comparatively modern invention of gunpowder has blown many of the appliances of ancient warfare from the battlefield, and among the discarded munitions Greek-fire takes a prominent place. A very high antiquity has been claimed for its invention, the period of the early wars between the Greeks and the Romans being pointed out by some writers as the true era of its discovery; but there are no authentic records of the use of the compound prior to the sieges of Constantinople in the seventh and eighth centuries, although some indications given by certain Assyrian bas-reliefs point to the use of liquid fire as a projectile at a period long antecedent to the Christian era. One of the early Fathers of the Church, too, gives instructions for the manufacture of a combustible substance, the main ingredients of which were resin, pitch, turpentine, sulphur, and the juice of the plant 'all-heal.'

It seems, however, that the true Greek-fire was invented in the year 678 by Callinicus, an architect of Heliopolis, in Syria, and that he afterwards deserted from the Calif and carried his secret and the art of its use to Constantinople, where for several centuries the method of compounding the fire was preserved, according to Gibbon, 'as the palladium of the state; the galleys and artillery might occasionally be lent to the allies of Rome, but the composition of the Greek-fire was concealed with the most jealous scruple, and the terror of the enemy was increased and prolonged by their ignorance and fright.' The secret was so carefully kept by the Eastern emperors that Constantine even devised misleading answers to be returned to any too inquisitive barbarian who might be tempted to ask inconvenient questions. 'They should be told that the mystery of the Greek-fire was revealed by an angel to the first and greatest of the Constantines, with the sacred injunction that this gift of Heaven—this peculiar blessing of the Romans, should never be communicated to any foreign nation; that the prince and the subject were alike bound to religious silence, under the temporal and spiritual penalties of treason and sacrilege; and that the infamous attempt would provoke the sudden and supernatural vengeance of the God of the Christians.' The historian adds that the secret was confined for above four hundred years to the Romans of the East, and that at the end of the eleventh century the Pisans, to whom every sea and every art were

familiar, suffered the effects, without understanding the composition of Greek-fire.

However true it may be that the secret was successfully preserved from the Romans of the Western Empire, it is certain that the Saracens contrived to obtain possession of the art of manufacturing this important munition of mediæval warfare at least as early as the commencement of the tenth century. We read that, at the siege of Thessalonica, which took place in 904, the Saracens cast liquid fire by means of tubes upon the wooden fortifications of the city, and by thus destroying the defences succeeded in capturing the town. The black clays of Media and Persia probably supplied these pioneers of the faith of Islam with the principal constituents of the compound used.

The celebrated Englishman, Friar Bacon, who lived so many years in advance of his generation, and who is credited with several discoveries which have proved of inestimable value to succeeding ages, is supposed to have concealed his real knowledge of the composition of Greek-fire under the mask of an assumed ignorance, and to have returned anagrammatic answers to questions addressed to him upon the subject. He gives sulphur and saltpetre as two of the components of Greek-fire, and it is stated that a third is to be detected in the logogryph, 'Luru vopo vir Can utriel.' The words 'urit voraciter' can be extracted from the anagram with little difficulty, but the interpretation of the remaining portion has baffled ingenuity.

Giambattista Porta says: 'Greek-fire is made by boiling willow-charcoal, salt, ardent aqua vitæ, sulphur, pitch, frankincense, threads of soft Ethiopian wool, and camphor.' The Princess Anna, daughter and historian of the Emperor Alexius Comnenus, states that Greek-fire was compounded of sulphur, resin, and oil. It has, however, been maintained by many writers, both ancient and modern, that naphtha or liquid bitumen was the principal ingredient of the fire. It is possible, therefore, that the *oil* mentioned by Anna Comnena, whose ample opportunities of obtaining reliable information must have insured her from the possibility of a mistake, was actually naphtha, and not one of the animal or vegetable oils then used for illuminating purposes, especially as the use of naphtha in lamps is a practice of very ancient date. 'Naphtha,' writes Gibbon, 'was mingled, I know not in what proportions, with sulphur, and with the pitch that is extracted from evergreen fir—that is, resin—in forming Greek-fire.'

According to the author of *LEsprit des Croisades*, the fire was compounded of the gum of the fir, pine, and other resinous trees, with the addition of brimstone and naphtha and other bituminous substances. Fanciful materials were sometimes included in its composition by those ignorant of its real nature. The water of a particular but unnamed fountain in the East, and duck's grease, are among these imaginary ingredients.

The liquid was used in various ways in the warfare of the times. Sometimes it was poured from ladles or caldrons upon the besiegers, or, enclosed in vessels of some brittle substance, was thrown into the ranks of the enemy by means of machines devised for the purpose. But frequently

the heavy ballista and other military engines used in early times for throwing missiles into besieged cities were pressed into service for scattering this destructive compound in large quantities—masses of the size of a barrel being sometimes propelled. 'It was either,' says the writer already quoted, 'poured from the ramparts in large boilers, or launched in red-hot balls of stone and iron, or darted in arrows and javelins, twisted round with flax and tow which had deeply imbibed the inflammable oil.' But usually it was vomited forth through long copper tubes from the mouths of fantastic figures, shaped to resemble the heads and jaws of savage animals, and set in the prows of ships, and by means of suitable engines it could be propelled to a considerable distance.

As long as Greek-fire was kept from the air it could be stored with little danger; but when poured out, it ignited with loud explosions, and vast volumes of thick black smoke issued from it. Owing to its viscid nature, it adhered to whatever it touched, and burned with an intense flame, which water not only failed to quench, but appeared to endow with more intense fury. Sea-water is particularly mentioned as intensifying its inflammability, and causing it to burn with doubled energy. It could only be put out by the use of large quantities of sand, vinegar, or earth, or by a very singular mixture, and one not likely to be met with.

The Saracens encountered the onslaughts of the crusading hosts by a free use of Greek-fire. The knights little feared the arrows and scimitars of their infidel opponents, but they retired aghast at the unearthly noise and hideous aspect of the mysterious enemy, of which we read in the *Memoirs of Joinville* that 'it came flying through the air like a long-tailed winged dragon, about the thickness of a hogshead, with the report of thunder and the velocity of lightning; and the darkness of the night was dispelled by this deadly illumination.'

Greek-fire has been known under various names in different times and countries. Procopius calls it 'Medea's oil.' Cinnamus, who wrote in the twelfth century, mentions it under the name of 'Median fire.' The Romans knew it as 'oleum incendiarium.' French writers refer to it as 'feu grégeois;' and the Chinese call it 'oil of cruel fire.' It has also been spoken of as 'wild-fire,' 'maritime fire,' 'wet-fire,' and 'fire-rain.'

In the year 1755 two Frenchmen, Gaubert and Dupré, are reported to have rediscovered the art of manufacturing Greek-fire; but as the Government prohibited them from making the nature of the composition known, their secret appears to have died with them. Niepce experimented in more recent times, and found through his investigations that a mixture of benzol and potassium in the proportion of six hundred to one exhibited many of the properties of the ancient composition.

Greek-fire was undoubtedly the most formidable material of war known to the middle ages, though its employment would seem to have been confined to Eastern Europe and Asia Minor; but after the discovery of gunpowder we hear little of its use as an engine of destruction, and the best authorities agree that Greek-fire is unsuited for employment in modern warfare. An attempt, indeed, was made in the American Civil War to revive its

use, and fire-shells, containing saltpetre, sulphur, coal-tar, and naphtha, were thrown, by means of cannon, into Charleston by General Gilmore from a distance of four miles, but it appears very improbable that 'the most villainous compound ever used in war,' as the disgusted Confederate, Beauregard, called it, will ever again be employed as a destructive agent.

BRONZE AGE TRUMPETS.

In the Danish National Museum, the trumpets from the Bronze Age have always attracted particular attention on account of their size, graceful shape, and tasteful ornamentation. They have only been found in morasses (peat-bogs), never in mounds; and, what has specially struck antiquaries, always in pairs. It has therefore been considered probable that the trumpets, for the purposes of harmony, had been used in pairs, which may also have been the case with the six trumpets (three pairs) which were found at the beginning of the century in a bog near Hillerød, island of Zealand, Denmark. They were tried at that time, just to prove that instruments many thousands of years old could give out sounds; and this was thought sufficient. Connoisseurs examined them carefully all over, their casting, ornamentation, the position of their finding, and in every way which could interest an antiquary. A musician, Dr A. Hammerich, took up the matter, and instituted a number of experiments by getting clever performers to play on them. The shape of the mouthpiece—the taper form, so carefully preserved throughout—the smooth inside—the dimensions of the tube, which have so much influence on the intonation—all prove a considerable knowledge of acoustics on the part of the makers, and that to get lower tones they had to increase the size of the instruments. As the trumpets must be over two thousand years old, this is a remarkable contribution to the history of music; and that such ancient instruments can to-day be used in their original compass, throws a characteristic light over our Bronze Age, speaking highly for the intellectual culture which must have existed during that age in Denmark.

WAITING.

BELOVED, in some dewy summer night,
Across the sapphire sea, the dusky sands,
Across the wind-fanned, ripening meadow-lands,
Fair June will come in shining robes bedight.
The amorous East will flush and flame with light
To welcome her. Set in the gleaming strands
Of her gold hair are roses: in her hands
She holdeth glistening lilies, cool and white.
Oh, warmer than the welcome the dawn skies
Give rose-crowned June, my welcoming shall be
For thee when thou wilt come. Dear love, I wait
In darkness weird, and cold, and desolate;
Yearning for that glad hour when I shall see
Thy sweet face with its love-lit, downcast eyes.

ALICE FURLONG.

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IN WHITE OF SELBORNE'S COUNTRY.

GILBERT WHITE, a quiet country parson, who yet made the name of Selborne world-famous, was born there on July 18, 1720, and died there on June 26, 1793. This year, therefore, is the Centenary of his death, and worthy to be noted as such.

Considering the popularity attained by the charming Letters which compose White's *Natural History of Selborne*, it is a little perplexing to find a reason for the neglect of Selborne and its neighbourhood by the public. Except by a few summer visitors, who are chiefly Americans, and the ubiquitous cyclist on the high-road from Farnham to Petersfield, the whole district, so rich in associations of this kindly observer of nature, seems to be almost disregarded. This is the more astonishing when we consider that it is within easy access of London, and offers a profusion of rustic pleasures such as should render it attractive to the dweller in the metropolis, weary of pavement and gas-lamp. It would also be difficult to point to another spot which, at the same distance from the city, possesses so charming a variety of forest, heath, and water, and above all the excellent quality of peacefulness.

The Selborne of to-day, allowing for a certain inevitable modernisation of its houses, does not differ considerably from that of White's time, as he described it. It might have been otherwise, however, if the railway had been brought nearer; but we like it better as it is, with its old-world charm, that seems to breathe somewhat of the retiring nature of the man that has made it famous. As one approaches the village from the Forest of Woolmer, coming by way of Blackmoor, one sees, after surmounting the sharp ridge by the site of the ancient priory, a long straggling line of white-walled houses, ending in a squat church, that has few pretensions to architectural beauty. Behind the houses, a hill, rising some three hundred feet above the village, and running its whole length, shuts off the view to the west; its side, covered with a dense grove of beech-

trees, forms the celebrated Hanger; while its summit is spread out in a wide level stretch, that is carpeted with velvety turf and shaded with many a leafy tree.

The 'cart-way of the village,' as White terms the single street, slopes upward until it reaches the open square space before the church gates. This square, says White, is 'vulgarly called the Plestor. In the midst of this spot stood, in old times, a vast oak, with a short squat body and huge horizontal arms, extending almost to the extremity of the area. This venerable tree, surrounded with stone steps, and seats above them, was the delight of old and young, and a place of much resort in summer evenings; where the former sat in grave debate, while the latter frolicked and danced before them.' This venerable tree was overturned by a tempest in 1703, and its place is now occupied by a sycamore.

In the churchyard, the old yew described by White in the *Antiquities of Selborne* still stands, with its 'squat, short, and thick' trunk; and if it seemed hoary to Gilbert White, what must we think of it to-day, now that a hundred years have elapsed since he wrote? On the west side of the Plestor is the old house in which White lived his retired life, and found the duties of his office and the study of nature sufficient occupation for one of his gentle disposition. His home remains as it was in his day, with the exception of certain additions to fit it to modern usages. Built of red-brick, now dulled by lapse of many years, it lies close under the Hanger, and looks out upon the Plestor and Litton across to the Forest of Woolmer.

And here it may not be out of place to mention the Early-English names of parts of the village still in use by the villagers. The Plestor, or square before the church already referred to, is the Pleystow, or ancient playground of the inhabitants, and so used by the children still; the Litton is the churchyard; and the sloping meadows through which a path runs to Oak-hanger are known as the Lith, a term derived from Saxon *hlith*, steep.

After the visitor has inspected the church and its tombs, which he will not fail to do, since it is here that White is buried, let him turn from the Litton, through the Plestor, and retrace his steps until he sees on his right hand the path that leads up through the Hanger of beech-trees to the down. It is a stiff climb, but one may rest on the way and admire the smooth boles of the beeches and their pendulous branches, that are so thickly interwoven as to cut off the rays of the sun, and to preserve beneath them on the brightest day a soft and pleasant shade. And when once the summit is reached, a rich reward is bestowed for the mere trouble of climbing. The visitor is scarcely prepared for the magnificent scene that is suddenly brought before his eyes; for while he was among the beeches, he could catch but occasional glimpses of the surrounding country. As soon, however, as he is clear of the trees and can allow his eye to roam over the land, he seems to have the whole south of England before him, so extensive is the prospect. South of us lie Filmer's Hill and Oakshott; rather more to the left the mass of Weaver's Hill, and, due east, at some twelve miles, the abrupt eminence of the Hindhead above Haslemere, continued backward in ridge after ridge to Guildford and the Downs near Dorking and Reigate. Between Selborne and the distant hills lies an undulating country so diversified with open heath, field, and forest, that one never grows weary of it. Even the steam from a hidden locomotive, as it curls upward in soft rolling volumes, gathers a picturesqueness from its surroundings which it does not usually possess.

To the east of the village lies the site of the old priory of Selborne, whose history is a capital example of the transitoriness of human affairs. Founded in 1232 by Peter de Roche, and endowed with increasing grants of land in the neighbourhood, it flourished for some two hundred and fifty years, and then, through internal dissension, having been deserted by prior and canons, it became the property of Magdalen College, Oxford. The unoccupied buildings fell by lapse of time into decay, nor did the people of Selborne resist the temptation of assisting nature in this respect; for they helped themselves so liberally to the wood and stones that in a few years nothing was left standing. At the present moment, not even the foundations remain of the home of the pleasure-loving canons of Selborne.

The term 'forest' as applied to that of Woolmer must be taken in its earlier and not in its modern sense. With us, a forest generally means a place of trees; it was anciently applied to such portions of uncultivated territory as were devoted to the purposes of the chase—in the same sense, indeed, as it is still used when we speak of a deer forest in the Highlands of Scotland. Hence White rightly describes such a forest, when he observes that Woolmer Forest consisted of heath and fern without a standing tree in its whole extent. It is no longer thus to the same degree, a great part of it having been planted with firs that flourish in the sandy soil. This portion of White's country is interesting not only as an ancient hunting forest of the kings and for its tales of deer-stealers, but from the fact that it was a favourite

haunt of the naturalist, and that it yielded to his searching observation much of the knowledge he so quaintly sets forth in his Letters. Many a pleasant hour may be spent among the quiet fir-woods and by the still waters of Woolmer Pond. According to White's computation, this pond must have been of much greater extent in his day than it is at present. We doubt much whether it covers more than a fourth of the sixty-six acres he measured, and it cannot be compared either in extent or beauty with that of Frensham, just over the borders of Surrey.

From Selborne the road to the forest runs by Blackmoor Church to the high-road from Farnham to Petersfield; and by following this way, one arrives in time at the elevated heath known as Bowdon. At the foot of this heath the main road branches off to Farnham, but another leads straight in front through the village of Kingsley to Oakhanger. This latter place, to which White so frequently refers, is a small village with an enormous common, which is swampy in parts, and is the home of hundreds of rabbits, that spring up and bound away at express speed as one passes.

It is through Oakhanger that the way back to Selborne lies, and there are four paths open to the choice of the pedestrian: either the road by Blackmoor; or by East Wordham; or by Hartley Maudit; or, lastly, by the path that runs along the wooded hill behind Oakhanger into the Lith, and thus into Selborne. If advice were being sought, we should unhesitatingly recommend the route of the Lith, not only because it is a path through copses and green meadows, but because the other three are dusty cartways, and, moreover, that of Hartley Maudit—rightly so named, if only on account of its wretched road—is strewn with large and sharp flints, that make walking a penance and not a pleasure. If the visitor turns off at the inn outside Oakhanger village and climbs the hill-road, he will find on either hand copses that in spring are brightened with thousands of pale primroses. When he has arrived close under the abrupt eminence that forms the summit of the ridge, a path leads by a farmhouse through a hop-field into the Lith. Here there is, on the right hand, a lofty ridge, clothed to the summit with beech-trees; while on the left the green meadows slope rapidly away to a line of hawthorns that run in a charming irregularity the length of the fields, and mark the banks of the little stream flowing hence through Godalming and Guildford to the Thames at Weybridge.

Separated from Woolmer Forest by Bowdon Common, the Alice Holt Forest extends almost as far north as Farnham. This forest consists mainly of groves of noble oak-trees; but, unfortunately, it is so carefully shut in by thorny hedges that one cannot enter at will; and thus much of the pleasure that the forest might afford is denied the visitor. It owes its luxuriance to the fact that the soil is a rich loam, the reverse of the loose sand of Woolmer; and it is also a curious circumstance that, while the herds of the latter forest were of red-deer, those of the former consisted entirely of the fallow-deer, and, further, though there was slight hindrance to the herds wandering from forest to forest, no red-deer were ever found in Alice Holt, nor any fallow-deer

in Woolmer. As late as White's time, the deer-herds of Alice Holt Forest existed; at the present time, however, they have all vanished—when and how, is not to be ascertained.

It is surprising to observe how small an area of country it was to which White confined his observations on birds and animals, though this, indeed, adds to the thoroughness of his work. His Letters are confessedly on the natural history and antiquities of his own parish, and he rarely mentions places beyond its boundaries. He could not have been unacquainted, however, with Frensham Pond, though he only mentions it casually; for this—Selborne itself alone excepted—is the most interesting locality of the neighbourhood. One comes suddenly upon the pond, and at a first visit, a start of astonishment is unavoidable when its white sandy shores flash into one's view at a certain spot in the road. An open lake of over a hundred acres in extent, with banks of white sand, is the last thing one might expect to find in this corner of the world; ponds there are in plenty, some natural, others artificial, but a lake—well, we are thankful for it, since it adds another charm to an already charming district.

Any account of White's country would be incomplete without some reference to the heath-fires. Much of the pleasure to be gathered from a stay there is got upon the open, breezy, healthy heaths, that form such a peculiar feature of the scenery. Stretching for mile after mile, they offer an easy path to the pedestrian, since between the furze the grass grows soft and springy, and the wind that plays over them refreshes him even on the warmest day of summer. It is in early spring that the furze, dried by the east winds, burns with the greatest readiness, and at that time one may stand at some elevated spot and see the common blazes in half-a-dozen different places. Says White in his seventh letter to Pennant: "Though (by statute 4 and 5 W. and Mary, cap. 23) "to burn on any waste between Candlemas and Midsummer any grig, ling, heath, and furze, goss, or fern, is punishable with whipping and confinement in the House of Correction;" yet in this forest [Woolmer], about March or April, according to the dryness of the season, such vast heath-fires are lighted up that they often get to a masterless head, and, catching the hedges, have sometimes been communicated to the underwoods, woods, and coppices, where great damage has ensued."

As in his day, so in ours; spring after spring, these fires are lighted, and such a degree of expertness have the people arrived at by long practice, that the owner of ruined plantations can never lay his hand upon the culprits. The reason given for these foolish conflagrations is that, when the old furze has been removed, young grass will spring in its stead, and afford pasturage for the commoners' cattle; but it more frequently happens that the devastation is so complete that several seasons elapse before the grass makes its appearance. A personal experience of the writer's may help to show the destruction thus wantonly set on foot. He was crossing at about eleven o'clock, one moonlight night in April, over the common known as Bowdon, to reach his inn. He had arrived at the highest point of the heath, where the road slopes rapidly

downward, when, suddenly, there shot up among the furze not a dozen yards from him a red tongue of fire. In a few seconds he was upon the scene; and though so short an interval had elapsed, no sign of the perpetrator of the outrage was to be seen; within this short space of time, the furze, that was as dry as tinder by reason of the rainless, windy weather, was spreading the flames in all directions. There was nothing to be done but to watch the fire as it rapidly extended, gathering strength at every yard, demolishing the tough gorse as if it were so much tissue-paper, and sending up to the clear heavens volumes of short-lived sparks and dense smoke. And in the morning, what a scene of desolation met the eye! Some thirty acres of the more beautiful portion of the heath lay reduced to ashes, in which only the charred stumps of the gorse stood erect. It is no wonder the authorities of olden days made the offence punishable with whipping and confinement.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXII.—THE LAST OF UNCLE HARRY.

THE shock of the sudden and unlooked-for announcement of Uncle Harry's probable death smote roughly upon Isabel, and upon all; and the worst was that no one could do anything but wait with painful expectation for further news.

"Poor, lonely Uncle Harry!" Isabel could not refrain from exclaiming that night to her father. "To have wandered alone all his days with his life in his hand among strange, wild people, and now to lose it in his own country, and to be still alone! Oh, but the bitterest thought to me, father, is that he and you never met in reconciliation! He had intended that you should, I am certain; but it has been decreed otherwise!"

"Sad, sad!" said her father. "All things were shadows to him except those which moved his affections! "Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue!"

That was all; but he was manifestly much affected. He stroked his brow and twitched his fingers; and when he had withdrawn for the night, he tramped his bedroom floor for hours.

Isabel was anxious about him; for she perceived he was slipping into one of his nervous conditions, in which it was his habit to flee for relief to his deadly drug. Yet she must go to school next day. Before she went, she sent for Doughty, and earnestly impressed on him the necessity of being assiduous in his watchfulness over his chief.

"Miss Raynor," said he, "what man can do, short of absolute violence, I will do; be assured."

Yet, when she returned from school, her father was gone, and Doughty too! There was, however, a pencil scrawl from Doughty: "He would not be detained by any consideration I could urge. So I have gone with him. Do not blame me: I am a miserable being.—A. D." To add to the overwhelming pain of that discovery, there was a telegram from her uncle Suffolk: "He was gone before I reached here. I am told the last word on his lips was "Isabel."—Will write." Isabel took that to mean that Uncle Harry meant to

convey his forgiveness to his brother. And why was his brother not there to receive it? She bowed her head on her hands and wept tears of bitter disappointment and humiliation. She knew herself well enough to perceive that if her father frequently behaved in this cowardly manner—ran away from the slightest touch of pain—then her patience would give out, and she would revolt against him. She feared that the feeling of revolt might suddenly rise within her to overturn and destroy all her careful plans for her father's salvation, and she cried through her tears: 'Don't let that happen! Oh, don't let that happen!'

Presently she dried her tears, and rose and bathed her eyes, and went out with all speed to ask Alan Ainsworth to help her. Like a true knight, he did not linger to get explanations, nor even to receive a kind word, but sprang away to perform her bidding. Three or four hours later the erring father arrived home again in a cab with Doughty. Ainsworth had sent them home thus after leaving them in the Strand, with an apology to Miss Raynor for not accompanying them all the way, because he had a theatrical performance to attend. Then Isabel blamed herself for hurrying him off on her errand when he had business of his own so imminent.

'Oh, father, father!' she said to her father when they were alone, 'could you not at such a time have endured to stay at home, when we were expecting to hear about Uncle Harry at any hour?—Read that.' And she handed him Uncle Suffield's telegram; and that was all the reproach she gave him.

'The bitterness of death is past for him!' said he, with that loose-lipped and limp manner peculiar to him at such a time. 'There remains for me the bitterness of life!'

Next morning came the promised letter from Uncle Suffield, giving such details as the reader knows—that there had been complications in Uncle Harry's case, that he had not spoken from the moment he had been struck down, save near the end, when he had murmured 'Isabel,' and signified that a book in which he had written many things was to be given to her.

'So you see, my dear,' wrote Mr Suffield, 'he had you in his thoughts at death, as I know he had you in his thoughts in life. He lay there looking very peaceful, as I saw him. I don't think he had let the sun go down upon his wrath: you know what I mean. Poor Harry! I could have better missed a better man. But he was a good man, was Harry, though he was obstinate and cranky. Yet he was thoughtful for all, as they will discover—and at the very last, thoughtful particularly of his faithful black servant. I am arranging for his burial at his native place in Yorkshire. It will be three days hence, on the 23d, and I think you ought to bring your father, who, I hope, is keeping well under your care, my dear.—I think that is all I need say at present.'

When the proposal that he should attend the funeral of his brother was presented to him, John Raynor shied a bit, as a nervous horse shies at its own shadow. 'I have not,' said he to his daughter, 'and never had, any dread of death merely as death! It's all the thoughts and memories and regrets that flap round it like hungry vultures that make it horrible and distracting. I can do

Harry no good by going to see his coffin put into the ground—our funeral arrangements are of the most gloomy and revolting kind—I can do him no good, and I can only give myself pain.—Besides, my dear, there is the great expense of so long a journey.'

'But just think, father,' urged Isabel. 'These things you say are quite true. But is it not in a proper sense unmannerly and inhuman to seek to live so much outside the common feelings and customs of average humanity? You can do no good to the dead by going, but you can please the living. If you do not go, it will be thought that you cherish resentment against your brother; and I am sure you don't do that.'

'I don't! I don't!' answered her father. 'Poor Harry!'

'Then, father dear, brace up your feelings to go. I'll go with you, of course, and it probably will not be so painful an experience after all.'

So Mr Raynor yielded, and went.

It was a beautiful day when Harry Raynor was laid in the little churchyard of his native village. The church stood high on a breezy upland, with its head set to look away over wold and sea towards the gorgeous and mysterious East, straining its eyes, as it were, to catch a glimpse of those distant lands where its latest dead had spent the best years of his life. It was always cool and fresh up there. The bent of the few trees showed how the wild north-easter ranged at will in winter, and the lean and ruffled clover and corn how even the soft zephyr of summer had a frolicsome briskness unknown below. As Isabel had anticipated, her father and her aunt met over the grave, and the natural tie of blood asserted itself. Mrs Suffield clasped her brother's hand, and a tear stole into the eye of each. And when the funeral was over, they had reminiscences of their youth to exchange with old friends and neighbours who had never left home, and whom they discovered to be living the same lives, exchanging the same opinions, and venturing on the same jokes as they remembered were in use when they were young. Is not that kind of thing the chief charm of a belated visit to the home of our youth?

To Isabel the most memorable fact of the occasion was the presence with her cousin George of Daniel Trichinopoly, 'the faithful black servant' of her late uncle. He was a picturesque reminder of her uncle's strange and adventurous career; and, moreover, he impressed on her the fact of his recent intimate connection with her uncle.

'Mees Isabel,' said he, approaching softly, with a bow and a smile, when the Sahib had been committed to the embrace of mother earth, 'may I address a word? With regard to the respectable Sahib, my good and noble master which is gone away, I am rejoice to say he have trusted me with a thing to do. He have say, hardly and scarcely, "Isabel," and have put his eyes on this book; and with attention I have took care and bring it myself; and I place it, lady, in your respectable hand.'

'Daniel,' said George, coming forward, 'asked me what he should do about the book. He had happened to bring it away, because he thought he was entrusted with it, and so I said he had better present it to you himself.'

'With regard,' said Daniel, 'it is so. It is

right—is it not? Hope the book will be handy to you, etcetera.—Respectable mees, I kiss the hand.’ ‘I am much obliged to you, Daniel,’ said Isabel; and Daniel withdrew.

‘So,’ said her aunt, who, seeing what was toward, had come near with her husband and her brother, ‘you have got possession of your book, Bell. I suppose poor Harry prized it, and expected you particularly to prize it. A clasped book too. Private matters written in it, I suppose.’

Isabel, considering herself thus challenged to open it, undid the clasp, and looked here and there at what was written.

‘It seems to be a diary of his tour, with reflections,’ said she, and closed it again.

‘Your uncle and I,’ continued her aunt, ‘have been thinking that we should put up some monument or memorial of Harry; but we have thought also we should not do anything without consulting you.’

‘Me, aunt?’ exclaimed Isabel.

‘A man’s true monument,’ said Isabel’s father, sadly, ‘is the work he has done.’

‘Well, that to us,’ said her aunt quickly, ‘is represented by the fortune he made—which, I am thankful to say, is left in the family. But it seems only a nice and proper thing to do to put up something to show that the family appreciates what he has done. And now that the family happens to be all together’—

‘But, aunt,’ protested Isabel, ‘the family, surely, will be all together many a time after this. Can’t we let this day pass with its own proper duty?’

‘It might be well, my dear,’ said her aunt, ‘to settle something now, since we must consult the clergyman whenever anything is done. But just as you please, Bell, my dear.’

‘But why should it be as I please, aunt?’ said Isabel, really perplexed. ‘Why should you defer to me? It is surely a matter for you and uncle and my father to arrange.’

‘And for you, too, my dear,’ said her uncle, patting her shoulder. ‘Though you will understand that better by-and-by; I *think* you will.—But don’t worry her about it, Joan.’

Still Isabel did not guess why her opinion should be asked, nor why she should be deferred to. And her aunt again urged her point, and carried it; and then they all went in quest of the vicar.

‘You had better bring Bell along, George,’ said Aunt Joanna to her son, who was standing aloof. ‘You haven’t seen her since Whitsuntide, and you can tell her how things have been going in Lancashire.’

And still Isabel could not understand why her aunt, who had hitherto sought to keep her and George apart, should now seek to bring them together.

Soon it was time to separate—George and ‘the faithful black servant’ to return to Lancashire, and the others to London.

It was thus on good terms with each other they went their several ways. Mr and Mrs Suffield had first-class tickets, and Suffield insisted that Isabel and her father should travel back first-class also, smiling significantly when Isabel protested she could not afford it, and himself paying the difference on their third-class

tickets. But the journey was long, and the fatigue was great, in spite of the comfort of a first-class carriage; and the opposite tempers of Mrs Suffield and her brother soon were in a condition of friction. There was no open disagreement, but each felt that a very little of the other’s company was sufficient for the day. As they sped away south, silence fell upon them; but when they entered upon the rich, flat, fen district, the quiet sleepy charm of the land soothed and softened their spirits. The day was almost done; the darkness was slowly gathering and rising like a vapour in the low east, and in the west the burning sun was sinking fast, thronged around with courtly clouds of glory. It was a gorgeous and bewildering spectacle, and as they watched it, the dark and solemn trees in the distance stood up tall—stood, as it were, on tiptoe—to see the lord of light go down over the rim of the earth—reminding them of the mystery and the wonder of Death, from which they were being whirled away to the small cares and anxieties and the entangling hopes and fears of Life.

And then they rolled along through the swiftly gathering gloom, with their imaginations and feelings subdued; and at length rushed in among the lights and the hot haze and vapours of London. It was a notable experience for them all. At King’s Cross the Suffield carriage was in waiting, and bore them on together to the gate of Isabel’s lodgings, where they said adieu.

‘I shall want to see you very particularly to-morrow,’ said her uncle to Isabel at parting. ‘Lucky that it’s Saturday and you’ve no school. I’ll come in the morning.’

(To be continued.)

SOME SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT SNAKES.

By DR ARTHUR STRADLING.

To give a catalogue of all the errors and superstitions concerning Serpents which have prevailed throughout the historical period of man’s existence would require a library of bulky volumes. It is perhaps not too much to say that nearly every popular idea which has ever held ground among the ‘tribe accursed and banned’ is in itself a superstition, even down to the conception of the facts and events of a snake’s ordinary every-day routine of life; and, in spite of the widely penetrating disinfection of prejudice and delusion by education, and the rapidly growing taste for the study of natural history, the remark applies as much to the notions which are commonly accepted at the present time, and in civilised countries, with regard to the Ophidia, as to any prevalent in the darkest ages. With such mistakes as arise purely and simply from lack of correct information, such as the impossibility of a serpent dying of any injury before sundown, and vulgar errors of that description, I do not propose to deal in the course of this paper, nor with those doctrinal questions of ophiology which seem always open to argument—snake-charming, fascination of prey, the protective swallowing of young vipers by the parent, and so forth; but I offer a few more or less picturesque heresies, culled amongst divers peoples in the course of my wanderings to and fro on the surface of the globe.

To those who are acquainted with the *cobra di capello* and the great square 'hood' or pair of fins which it spreads by the erection of the long ribs behind its head, that is a weirdly horrible fancy of the Singhalese Tamils, who assert that every time it bites and expends its venom after it has attained its full length, it loses one joint of its spine. The process of curtailment goes on until the whole body has disappeared with the exception of the head and hood, both of which have undergone a sort of compensating enlargement, while the mouth has widened until the face of the reptile presents the aspect of a malignant toad. With increased death-dealing powers, the exercise of which subjects it to no further penalty, it now betakes itself to an aerial mode of life, flying by the flapping of its extended sides after the manner of a bat.

A somewhat similar fable is heard amongst the natives of Bengal, who furthermore declare that this square-winged fiend is the only snake who refuses to be frightened away when the name of the king of the birds (Garudá) is called aloud in his hearing, and that the docking of the vertebre corresponds to the number of human lives which the cobra has sacrificed in former days. It is to be hoped that the latter allegation, at any rate, is not founded on fact, as there are often several hundreds of segments in the backbone of a serpent.

This superstition is curiously akin to that held by the settlers in many parts of America—though not, so far as I have been able to discover, by the aboriginal Indians of the same regions—to the effect that the rattlesnake acquires a new thimble to its rattle for every man it kills. How the tradition first arose is, of course, uncertain; but it is one of comparatively high antiquity, mention being made of it in some of the earliest descriptions of the 'Viper with the Bell.' Matter-of-fact people, as a rule, find a less romantic explanation of this remarkable appendage in the indication it is said to afford of the reptile's age—one joint for every year—which is certainly no more correct than the other, and has the additional demerit of being commonplace and prosaic in its fallacy. When the little *Crotalus* is born, its tail is furnished with a single tip of horn, incapable of producing any sound by the violent vibration which its owner nevertheless communicates to it whenever excited. In some near relatives of the rattlesnake, such as the *guruucu* of Brazil, this horny claw or nail persists throughout life without addition thereto. But in the rattlesnakes proper—and there are many species of them—two, and sometimes three, joints appear during the first few months of the creature's life; then and later there is probably no definite relation between their number or frequency of development and its age, though they may be proportionate in some measure to its rate of growth. Broods of young serpents belonging to this genus which I have reared have exhibited great diversity in this matter; so much so, that it has been impossible to base any calculation on observations of the phenomena presented by them. The overlapping 'thimbles' or cones of which the rattle is composed are thin, dry, and exceedingly brittle, and in consequence the instrument is easily broken off when it has reached the length of from one to two inches,

though longer specimens are occasionally seen; twenty joints make an exceptionally big rattle. This shedding of the rattle is in all cases accidental, and due to external causes, not a constitutional and periodical function like the casting of the skin. When it breaks off at the root or in the middle, there is generally no trace left of a fracture having taken place, as the thimbles are all alike and any one forms a symmetrical termination to the organ. Whatever purpose the rattle may serve in the snake's economy—and its use is still involved in some obscurity—it undoubtedly does *not* represent its owner's age, nor the sum-total of his manslaughter.

In many countries it is affirmed, most ungalantly, that the female snake alone is venomous. We know that a sexual difference in this respect is true of certain poison-bearing insects; but it is hardly to be supposed that such an idea with regard to serpents could have taken its origin from an acquaintance with a rather recondite fact of entomology. That those who recover from snake-bite are subject to a recurrence of the symptoms at the same time of each year as long as the aggressor lives, is also an article of faith with the inhabitants of far-sundered parts of the earth. To burn old shoes in places infested by these reptiles is said to cause them such disquietude that they vacate the spot as speedily as possible, with every manifestation of being seriously incommoded by the proceeding, and return no more. On some parts of the Continent, boys who pet snakes sprinkle the floors of their cages thickly with powdered brimstone, wherein they are thought to thrive appropriately. Little less than a superstition is the belief in the partiality for milk with which they are almost universally credited, and upon which are built up ludicrous stories innumerable. John Aubrey, the English antiquary, recommends the powder obtained from a snake which has been caught at midnight of Midsummer Eve—not an easy capture at that hour—'when all the planets are above the earth,' killed, skinned, and dried in the shade, as the wherewithal to procure invisibility; and this again, with local modifications, represents a superstition obtaining all over the world. One of the funniest notions is that mentioned by Madame La Barca, that those Mexican Indians who have been successfully inoculated with serpent-venom acquire the power of inflicting a poisonous bite!

The existence of flying snakes is spoken of with the most confident credulity in Java, in South Africa, in Yucatan and Mexico, and in many places besides India and Ceylon. Most ophidians have a habit of flattening their bodies and even their heads when angry or alarmed, a habit rendered possible by the loose attachment of their bones. The term 'spreading viper' is applied to more than one species in the States in recognition of this peculiarity, which, by the way, our common grass-snake evinces to a notable degree. Flattest of all, perhaps, is the long-headed or leaf-marked snake of Northern Brazil, which when enraged looks absolutely as though a broad cart-wheel had passed along its back from stem to stern, giving really colourable support to the statement of the Paranesse, that it rises in the air with an undulatory movement and skins straight for the eyes of its disturber. The

ordinary viper is said by the peasantry in certain districts of England to develop wings when it grows old, and to fly around on its deadly errands with a baleful buzzing. It is just possible that the world-wide traditions of crested, wattled, winged, and hairy serpents may be due to imperfect apprehension of facts actually observed. The normal method of a snake's shedding its slough is for the latter to be thrown off entire in one unbroken piece, forming a complete cast or envelope of the creature, with the perfect presentment of every scale. (This process takes place in a healthy reptile at intervals of from six to ten weeks, except during the period of hibernation; not once a year, as is commonly supposed.) But in old snakes always, and not unfrequently in young ones from various causes, this sheath of cuticle flakes away and is detached piecemeal, large sections of it becoming dry and remaining adherent to the body until accidentally removed by violence. One can readily imagine that a hasty glimpse of a serpent furnished with adventitious appendages of this character, and darting away into the bushes before any accurate note could be taken, might well give rise to misconception concerning its true nature.

After all, a winged snake is conceivable. It has a vacancy for limbs, two or four; and, once assumed, these might be of any recognised pattern or function without violation of zoological proprieties, such as is perpetrated by the conventional representation of an angel. Nearly as bad are the pictures of snakes in the water, where they are invariably shown with 'serpentine' loops and coils thrown high above the surface, the neck gracefully arched in the air. I believe that I have never seen a picture of a snake disporting itself in a pond or swimming down a river which does not exhibit this absurdity—and I keep a constant lookout for such things! The best of ophidians, even the oar-tailed sea-snakes, are poor swimmers—a glance at their conformation will at once indicate that this must of necessity be the case. The weight of the body is distributed over no large area, and their means of propulsion are almost *nil*. Under these circumstances, it is as much as they can do, by dint of vigorous wriggling, to shoot their heads alone above the surface when immersed, while to elevate any portion of their bodies arch-wise is as impracticable to them as flight through the air. The snake oft mentioned, but as yet unknown to science, which takes its tail in its mouth and bowls along the ground like a hoop, is no greater anomaly.

The Zunis, among their thousand snake-superstitions, have two that occur to me as especially curious. One is, that the aura of a dying person will attract all the serpents in the neighbourhood, and that the body of an Indian who has perished on the ground is frequently unapproachable by reason of the myriads of reptiles which surround it. They do not attempt to eat it, but lie with their heads towards it, looking at it. If a man has been killed, they will assemble at the spot where his blood fell, in like manner; but, though the Zunis offer no physical explanation of this, they do not seem to attribute it to any supernatural impulse. The other runs to the effect that a rattlesnake will refuse to bite an unfaithful wife. How the test is applied, I was never

able to learn; but the unfortunate squaw who is under suspicion would seem to be in a very awkward predicament if submitted to such an ordeal, whichever way the augury may point.

Hindus of all castes agree that the body of a snake accidentally killed should be burned, as it may have been the incarnation of a Brahmin. Such, at least, used to be their creed; but the Government rewards for the heads of venomous species would seem to have modified considerably their veneration for possible grandfathers and mothers-in-law in ophidian guise. At any rate, the collection and careful hatching of cobra's eggs is now a well-known practice of the dusky ophiolator, who feeds the young snakes until they are big enough to found a claim to the annas paid on evidence of their destruction. A very mischievous error lies in the commonly-accepted idea that the brutal process of extracting a venomous serpent's fangs necessarily renders its subsequent bite powerless to instil its death-dealing secretion. Unless the poison glands and ducts be extirpated—and one need hardly point out that this is not accomplished by the mere withdrawal of the two grooved teeth—the dribbled venom, constantly forming, may easily be inoculated by the scratch of a common tooth or the rough edge of the exposed maxillary bone; to effectually remove the parotids without inflicting mortal injury on the snake would require the knowledge and dexterity of an experienced anatomist.

Serpents are anything but monogamists, yet the glamour of popular superstition accredits them with such enduring affection for each other, that if one be killed, its spouse will track the slayer unrelentingly until it can avenge its companion's death. One of the prettiest of the numberless snake-stone hypotheses is that which ascribes their origin to the reptiles themselves. Certain snakes of India, on obtaining the respectable age of one thousand years, are endowed with a jewel in the head, a stone clear and pellucid as crystal, in the centre of which a live crescentic fibre vibrates and oscillates unceasingly for ever. This snake-born gem sucks the poison from an envenomed wound in the same way as the less romantic snake-stones are alleged to do, the latter consisting usually of calcined bone or horn, or concretions from the gall-bladders of goats. It has been recently stated, in apparent serious good faith on the part of the narrator, that the cobras of Ceylon carry shining pebbles of fluor-spar in their mouths, to attract the fireflies at night! Compared with these, the Guatemalan serpent which, instead of a head, bears a tulip-shaped flower, into which butterflies wander to their doom as the petals close upon them, sinks into nothingness.

Without the faintest desire to rekindle the embers of the terrible viper-swallowing-its-offspring controversy, I may mention as an example of that absence of maternal affection which I have found invariable amongst the reptiles which have come under my observation, that I once discovered a large brood of new-born viperine snakes (jarraraccas—over sixty of them, if I remember aright) in a broken tank on the island of Paqueta, near Rio de Janeiro. Not only had their mother deserted them, but she must have

taken considerable trouble to escape from the smooth-walled enclosure.

The horns of the deer, half-swallowed by a python, and allowed to stick out of its mouth until they rotted off, have had their day, and would scarcely find favour now in the 'Anecdotes of Animals' of a provincial newspaper; but what shall we say to the announcement boldly set forth in the label underneath the magnificent stuffed specimen of an anaconda in the Natural History Department of the British Museum, to the effect that the serpent twists its tail around a tree to afford purchase for the constriction of its prey? Great evolutionists have assumed, and their disciples have stated as a proven fact, that the vivid colours of the South American coral-snake serve to protect it from enemies by advertising its dangerous character; but to my certain knowledge it enjoys no immunity from the attacks of birds, rats, swine, and foxes, who devour it as greedily as do our own pheasants and peacocks the common viper.

But for all that is wildly and wantonly imaginative, the deliberate inventions, the typical 'snake-stories' must bear the palm, far and away above the traditions of the ages, be they poetic or grotesque. Why is it that the poor snakes have been the unvarying cause of lying amongst men, ever since the Father of Lies first assumed ophidian form? No other created thing seems to have a tithe part of the serpent's power of exciting gratuitously and unprovoked the most riotous invention. What genuine superstition, bred of the remotest antiquity, can compare with the three spiders which spun threads around a snake's mouth and sewed him up before proceeding to suck his blood—actually narrated in a scientific magazine as an instance of 'Sagacity of the Lower Animals'; or the copperhead that bit the Yankee's broomstick, 'which, jest as trew as you're there, was swelled up in five minutes as big as your leg!' or the affectionate rattlesnake which backed its tail into the baby's hand for him to rattle? And is there to be unearthed from the folk-lore of the whole world anything more delicious than the story of the prudent snake who, having caught a young rabbit by the tail, refrained from devouring him, but allowed itself to be dragged home to the ancestral burrow, where, like the ancient mariner of the *Bab Ballads*, it 'virtualled free' on the entire family.

THE RED-HOT NEEDLE.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

It was nine o'clock when Jack Felling ran breathlessly up the steps of the house at Dalston. Burdon opened the door, and a glance at his face informed Jack that there was no better news from the sick-room. He hurried past Burdon without saying a word and sped up-stairs. In about five minutes he came down again. Burdon was walking up and down the dining-room, his head bent, his hands tightly clasped behind his back.

'Burdon,' said Jack, 'you've had a long spell of watching; let me take my turn. I've had plenty of fresh air. You must be almost played out.'

Burdon looked at him. Jack's tone was hard and strange; moreover, he had always of late addressed Burdon as 'old fellow,' or even 'dear old fellow.' Then he placed his hand on Jack's arm and said: 'No, no. It's you who are overdoing it. Your mind is harassing your body. Let me keep on watching. I'm not a bit done. Go and get a good night's rest.'

'Get a good night's rest!' repeated Jack, glaring at Burdon with a wild, haggard look, in a voice that made Burdon withdraw his hand and step back—'get a good night's rest!—and the darling of my life lying at the point of death—mur— No! no! I don't mean that! Excuse me, old fellow. I think I am a little upset—and yet'— He walked slowly to the other side of the table. 'So, so! There's a—a good fellow! I'll watch to-night. I must! I must!'

'All right!' said Burdon. 'I'll go. But mind—if any change takes place, let me know!' He left the room.

Jack sank into a chair, leaned his arms on the table, and buried his face in them. Then he heard Burdon run up-stairs, and springing to the door, caught the following fragment of conversation between him and the doctor who was passing the night at the house: 'He must be looked after, doctor. His mind is unhinged. I don't think he's responsible for his words or actions.'

'Very well,' replied the doctor; 'I'll see to him, poor fellow.'

Then Burdon came down, put on his coat and hat, lit a cigar, and, bidding Jack good-night with a cordial shake of the hand, which met with no response, went out.

Jack filled a glass of sherry and drank it off; then he put on his hat, looked at his watch, walked up and down for ten minutes, stepped up to the doctor and told him that he should be back in an hour if possible, went out, hailed the first hansom, and was soon being driven rapidly in the direction of the Sailors' Home, Well Street. Arrived at the Sailors' Home, he asked to see Ah Why. 'You mean that Chaney chap, sir?' replied the porter. 'He ain't in, and won't be to-night, for he's flush of cash, and has gone off to spend it. But I think I know where you'll find him.'

'Where?' asked Jack eagerly.

'Number 42 Frigate Street, Wapping. Hopium den,' replied the porter; 'that's where them Chaney chaps goes in general when they has a few dollars in their pockets.'

In less than ten minutes Jack's hansom deposited him at the end of Frigate Street. Wapping is not a cleanly neighbourhood: Frigate Street is probably its least cleanly thoroughfare, and Number 42 was certainly not entitled to rank as amongst the cleanliest houses in Frigate Street.

A blear-eyed Chinaman answered Jack's knock at the little door, and opened it a few inches. 'No can see any man this side,' he said after a rapid survey of the visitor by the light of a dim oil lamp; 'all belong honest men, sir. Foo-chow Joe who makee steal the coals no have got, sir. Hai Ling, who get drunk and bleak that window, have makee said this marnin'.'

'I'm not the police,' said Jack. 'Give that piece of paper to Ah Why.'

The man read the name 'Ambrose Burdon,' took another look at Jack, said: 'All light; I go catchee he;' and would have shut the door, but that Jack had slipped his foot in.

'Look sharp!' said Jack in a tone not to be mistaken.

The man shuffled away, and Jack was left with his foot in the door, half sickened by the fumes of opium, which came pouring along the pitch-dark passage. In ten minutes, which seemed an hour to Jack, Ah Why appeared. His eyes were heavy, and he was obliged to lean against the doorpost for support, as he greeted Jack with a dreamy smile. But a glimpse of Jack's haggard face seemed to brace him up in a moment.

'All light, Mr. Burdon,' he said; 'I sabby what ting you wanthee. I sabby welly well.'

'Do you?' said Jack earnestly. 'Tell me.'

Ah Why put his mouth to Jack's ear and whispered a few words.

'Yes, yes, yes!' said Jack: 'that's it! How on earth did you guess? Well?'

'That makee cost much money.'

'Never mind! Can I have it? How much must I pay?'

'I tink five huddled dollar can do.'

'A hundred pounds. All right. Look sharp and get it.'

'If you pay my one huddled pounds, I go catchee it. A flend of my have got this side.'

'Will you take my IOU?'

'Yes.'

'Very well then. Be off and get it. I'll write the IOU.'

Ah Why shuffled off. Jack Felling had not seen Ambrose Burdon's signature on hundreds of letters and schedules without being able to imitate it exactly. Accordingly, when Ah Why returned, he handed him a leaf from his pocket-book on which was written: 'IOU one hundred pounds sterling.—AMBROSE BURDON.'

Ah Why examined the document and said: 'When you tinker you pay my, Mr Burdon?'

'This day week,' replied Jack.

'All light! Mind, sir, I talkee you like me business man. Supposee you no pay my'—

'Well—what then?'

'I can talkee tings about you that no belong number one,' replied Ah Why.

Then he put the paper carefully away, handed Jack a packet wrapped in a silk handkerchief, wished him good-night, and went back to his earthly paradise.

The next three days Jack afterwards described as the most anxious of all his life. During this time Ruth simply battled on the very brink of the river of death, suffering intense pain, and almost always bereft of reason. On the third night the crisis came. On the fourth morning the doctor announced that the girl had passed through it safely. During the fifth and sixth days she shook off so many bad symptoms that the doctor told the anxious watchers that they might now count upon her slow but sure recovery.

Overjoyed, so overjoyed that he could settle to nothing, but simply roamed about, laughing and rubbing his hands, Jack Felling snatched half an hour from his now pleasant duties in the house

of sickness, and went down to the Sailors' Home to see Ah Why. The Chinaman was not in, so Jack left a card.

Just about the time that Jack Felling called at the Sailors' Home, Ambrose Burdon was passing down the steps of the Pacific Bank in Old Broad Street. His face was not pleasant to look upon, and when from the gloom of the Austinfriars archway Ah Why slipped out and confronted him, it grew as black as thunder. 'What the devil are you doing here?' asked Burdon savagely.

Ah Why smiled. Chinamen are impervious to the blackest of looks and the soundest of kicks, and smile upon the reception of either. All the same they remember them.

'I welly glad to see you, sir,' said Ah Why.

'That's more than I am to see you,' retorted Burdon; 'and yet I do want to see you too.'

'Yes, sir, of course you do,' said the Chinaman suavely. 'I wanthee you settle that piecay IOU you give me last week.'

Burdon looked at the man amazed. Had they been on the Bund at Yokohama, or the Queen's Road, Hong-kong, instead of in the heart of London City, Burdon's stick would have been laid across Ah Why's shoulders. As it was, he had to vent his rage in expletives, and Ambrose Burdon had plenty of this artillery.

'You—wanthee—my—settle—that—IOU—I—give—you—last—week!' said he slowly. 'Why, you yellow scoundrel, I've never seen you since Yokohama—months ago. But, by Jove, let's get out of this.'

This remark was called for by the fact that a little crowd was beginning to collect near them, a crowd of those intelligent beings who become interested in the operation of a man tying up his bootlace, or buying a penny article from a kerb-stone merchant, and to whom the spectacle of a well-dressed Englishman and a shabby Chinaman talking together was out of the ordinary groove of street attractions. So he called a hansom, and told the man to drive them to the Tower. Arrived at the Tower, Burdon took Ah Why to that length of river-side terrace, part of which crosses the approach to the famous Traitors' Gate, and sat down on a bench.

'Now, then,' said Burdon sternly. 'First of all, what are you doing in England? Secondly, what's all this rotten talk about an IOU given by me to you last week?'

Ah Why smiled as he said: 'You memory belong welly bad, sir.'

'Confound your impudence! let my memory alone, and answer my questions,' said Burdon.

'I talkee you how fashion I come England side two week ago, when I meet you outside that joss-house,' replied the Chinaman.

'And I've just told you that I've never clapped eyes on your ugly face since I was in Yokohama,' said Burdon.

'Why, sir!' said Ah Why, edging to the further end of the seat, for there was danger in the Englishman's look, 'you come and talkee my one week back at that opium shop in Wapping,' said Ah Why; 'and you talkee my to give you something to kill that Led-hot Needle, and I give it you, and you give my a chit for one huddled pounds.' So saying he handed Burdon the IOU.

Burdon looked at it. Then, with an expression of horror on his face and a fearful execration, he sprang to his feet, and seizing the terrified Chinaman by the shoulder, hissed rather than said: 'Do you mean to tell me that you gave me something to kill that Red-hot Needle, and that I gave you my IOU for a hundred pounds in exchange?'

'Yes, sir; five nights ago,' replied Ah Why. 'But—why, sir, I no sabby—I don't think it was you—is there one piecey Englishman with face allosame yours?'

'Why, yes, there is!' cried Burdon in a voice of agony, the perspiration literally standing on his brow. 'Now I see it all. Now I see why that Red-hot Needle has failed! Say, Ah Why, did you tell him anything else?'

'Yes, sir,' replied the Chinaman, who was trembling with terror. 'He askee my questions, and I makee answer. He talkee his memory have makee go; he not 'member anything; he belong allosame you, and I talkee him allosame I talkee you.'

'About—about the cheques?' asked Burdon.

'Yes, sir; about all thing,' answered Ah Why.

'Then it's all up. You must hook it out of England as fast as you can. So must I,' said Burdon. 'Here—take what I have and go.' So saying, he emptied a pocket of loose coin into Ah Why's hand and strode away.

Half-way up East Cheap he saw Jack Felling approaching. Thinking to avoid him, Burdon turned up Rood Lane; but Felling came after him, and took him by the arm. 'Miss Tunstall is on the high-road to recovery,' said Jack, looking straight into the eyes of the miserable man.

'Yes—yes; I'm delighted to hear it,' stammered Burdon.

'You're not. That's a lie,' said Jack. 'Look here, Burdon. I've found you out. You are a villain—a villain of the very deepest dye. You are a robber, and, but for what can only be termed the merciful intervention of God, you would have been a murderer. Being the next of kin to this poor girl, you have, after having robbed your employers, deliberately concocted one of the foulest schemes of murder that have ever been known. As it is, with this infernal Chinese poison, this Red-hot Needle, you have condemned her to weeks of indescribable torment, all the time that you were playing the hypocrite under the same roof. Now I have you, and I am going to'—

Ambrose Burdon placed his hand to his mouth, Jack thought to pull his moustache, a constant habit with him. But the next moment there was a splintering of glass upon the pavement; then Burdon uttered one short, sharp cry, and fell heavily before Jack could catch him. When he was raised up, he was dead.

When the news got abroad that the lately cashiered Manager of the Yokohama branch of the Pacific Bank had fallen by his own hand, the majority of people could say nothing too hard of Directors who could visit the oversight of an officer so harshly. But a strong minority stuck to their original opinion that Burdon knew as much about the robbery as any one, and declared that it was to avoid the consequences of criminal proceedings that he had killed himself.

Jack Felling kept to himself the terrible secret he had been the accidental means of discovering, and it was only after Ruth had been his wife some months that he told her the extraordinary story which we have embodied under the title of the Red-hot Needle.

WALKING-STICKS.

THE fashion or habit of carrying a Walking-stick, or some article of the same nature, seems to have existed from the remotest antiquity. The spear of the warrior, the shepherd's staff, the club, baton, rod, or wand of office, are all developments of the same idea. It has been used not only as a support to the body, but to lend dignity and grace to the individual, and as a means of defence. In modern times the use of walking-sticks has increased enormously, and to-day the manufacture and use of these articles are cultivated almost to the extent of a fine art. But though popular and well known as an article of everyday use, very little is known about the walking-stick as an article of commerce—where it comes from, who makes it, and how it is made.

Under the general term 'Walking-stick Trade' is included the manufacture of sticks for umbrellas, &c., of which an incredible number are produced annually. In England—which, by the way, almost supplies the world—the number of men employed is about four thousand. The trade is rather scattered, though by far the greatest part is done in London, where, in the East End, it is carried on extensively. The workmen are chiefly drawn from the poorer classes of St Luke's, Finsbury, Shoreditch, Whitechapel, and Bethnal Green, in which parishes the principal workshops are situated. The trade is strictly a season one; it is among the first to feel depression, and among the last to recover. A large number of the men employed earn on the average a fair living, especially those in the largest houses, who enjoy, as a rule, the most regular employment. But a large section of the trade pays bad wages—in fact, in some cases it is a mere existence. A great quantity of sticks produced by these latter are manufactured in dwelling-houses, nay, in the very living-rooms, though in this respect there is a gradual improvement going on. The people among whom this state of things exists are mostly small manufacturers, who work on their own account. In busy times, it often happens the man is compelled to work nearly all night in order to get the work done in time for payment on Saturday. It has been known for wives and even children's help to be put to account. This is true when trade is busy, which is generally from March to November, when slack time begins, and continues, with more or less abatement, till the following spring.

During slack periods, most of the men are on half or three-quarter time; but a large number have practically no work at all; this, added to low wages in busy times, renders their lives and surroundings quite deplorable. The men most in demand are those with the ability to make samples, and the first question most employers put to a new workman, is, 'Can you make me anything fresh?' This is important, as on the freshness and variety of new samples depend the

chances of new and large orders. Men have ere now made a small fortune out of a new sample. This, of course, is rare; but it has occurred several times in the last ten years. A sample known as 'Brazilian Pine' became so popular as to make the whole trade unusually busy for two or three years. Another, known as 'Acacia,' has been in great demand for the last five years, and bids fair to become a standing order in the trade. 'English Furze,' dressed, bent, joined, and stained in a countless variety of combinations, has had a run on the market for some years; and there are scores of new samples on the kinds of wood I have mentioned being prepared even now for next season or the season after.

The raw material from which are produced the almost countless varieties of sticks in the market is brought from nearly every part of the earth. There is a large quantity grown in England, but the bulk is foreign. To get an idea of the vast quantity of foreign sticks imported into England, one should visit the London Docks, East Smithfield Entrance Warehouse, No. 1, which is one of the largest storehouses of the kind in England. Here, piled from floor to ceiling, are all sorts of sticks imaginable: pimento, olive, myrtle, hazel, oak, ash, orange, bamboo, Tonquin canes, and a host of others, in such profusion as to be bewildering. It must be seen to be realised, by any person outside the trade. It would be impossible to name all the different kinds of raw material; but the following are the names of the most important: Olives from America, Queensland, and South Africa. Pimento from the West Indies, chiefly Jamaica, from which island from three to four thousand bundles, each containing from five to eight hundred sticks, are imported annually. Many of these sticks are sawn up into half-a-dozen smaller ones. Myrtle from South Europe, and most of the countries situated round the Mediterranean Sea. Ash from America, South Europe, and South Africa. Cornel or cornelian cherry from Mid and South Europe and some parts of Asia. This wood is very tough, and was used extensively when the 'acacia' became popular. Also several varieties of each of the following: Oak, orange, cherry, hazel, thorn, Ceylon vines, supple-jacks, palm, orange, crab, birch, beech, sycamore, lancewood, ebony, Amboyna, tulip-tree, snakewood, rosewood, Whang-gee, Jambeze, Penang, Rajah, Partridge, bamboo, Tonquin, betel, Malacca, Nana, Madagascar, Whampoa canes, bird's-eye maple, greenheart, &c. The chief produce of Great Britain are: Oak, ash, furze, birch, hazel, thorn, beech, crab, sycamore, cherry, and many other minor varieties. This list will show the great amount of skill required to become a judge of the raw material only.

But though extensive, the raw material is nothing compared with the multiplication of species, which arise as manufacture proceeds. The reason of this lies in the fact that from nearly every kind of raw material several distinct kinds of sticks are produced. One illustration will make this clear. Olives for walking-sticks are subject to nine different processes—sawing, filing, straightening, finishing, staining, varnishing, pumicing, finecoating, and ferruling. In large houses, each process is carried out by different

workmen. More than this—it is possible to take half-a-dozen olives, and, by treating each of them differently, to produce a corresponding number of sticks, which are known in the market as pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, Australian bay, acacia, and olive—six distinct kinds from the same wood. This is done more or less in every branch of the trade, especially among what is known as 'Naturals,' that is, sticks made from the single branch of a tree. The handle is made to the desired shape from a piece of a thicker branch, which is left on for that purpose when the stick is cut. As it is difficult to get a sufficient quantity of sticks grown like this, the difficulty is met by joining the required piece on. The joint is so neat that most people would never notice it, or if they did, it would be more by accident than design.

The other great branch of work besides the natural is called 'Fancy,' and embraces carving, bending, inlaying, and everything which might be described as other than natural. There are many curious things made up into walking-sticks, such as snake-skins stretched on wood, sinews of large animals, sunflower stalks, cabbage stumps, sticks rendered curious by nature, some of which are of very strange and fantastic growth. The most curious stick the writer has ever met with was made as follows: A smooth round stick, on which knots were made with plaster of Paris, and then covered neatly all over with American table-covering, the pattern of which resembled the grain of wood. The edges were joined so neatly as to be invisible. The whole produced a very novel and peculiar stick, which deceived many experts, who, believing it to be wood, were puzzled at the peculiar grain. It was only by cutting a piece off that the trick was discovered.

Many pieces of very rare wood are made into walking-sticks—pieces of old ships, &c., beside scarce specimens of wood almost unknown, such as Myall wood, Australian black wood, muskwood, Cypress pine, zebra wood, kauri pine, cedar wood, calamander, sabien, and occasional pieces of lignum vitæ. The 'modus operandi' whereby sticks which grow crooked are made straight is not generally known, and has been the subject of some curious speculation. We do not remember to have met with a satisfactory account anywhere in print, although at different times sage advice has been given on the subject through the press, in answer to correspondents. All such advice, so far as we know, has been more or less erroneous and absurd. The main object is to render the wood or cane soft and pliable; to do this, it is plunged into heated sand. Woods such as oak, ash, orange, &c., require wet sand; while olives, pimento, and all varieties of cane, require dry sand. In addition to this, a contrivance called 'a horse' is used, which consists of a plank of beech two inches thick set up on one end at an angle of forty-five to sixty degrees. Out of the two edges of this plank, pieces are cut, to allow the insertion of the stick. When sufficiently heated, the stick is taken from the sand, and, using it as a lever, it is bent here and bent there until it is perfectly straight. This process is repeated at a later stage, which is called 'baking.' For this second process, dry sand is used; and the stick is not only made quite straight, but as stiff

as it is possible to make it. The success of this process depends entirely upon the judgment of the workman, who is known as a 'kilnman.' He must determine how much heat is required, and whether wet or dry sand. If he gives too much heat, the stick becomes stunted, and in most cases is useless, as it will rarely come straight after. If, on the other hand, he does not make it hot enough, it is liable to break in halves.

Wet sand is also used for bending purposes; but a more improved method for sticks requiring moist heat is to boil them in water. For bending canes and wood requiring dry heat, a powerful gas jet is used. All such work requires an extensive knowledge of the nature and growth of the material to be operated upon, and a large amount of skill in the process.

The dealers in raw material and the manufacturers are generally different persons; but during recent years, several large manufacturers have engaged in both kinds of business. There are several kinds of raw material, such as cherry, orange, &c., the supply of which being limited, is controlled almost exclusively by several of the leading manufacturers. Among them, they buy up the whole available quantity as soon as it arrives in this country. When secured, it is sorted, the best kinds picked out, and the remainder put back on the market for sale.

During the last decade, many important changes and improvements have been effected in the trade, nearly all of which may be traced to the general use of steam-power in place of manual labour, used hitherto. It began by the introduction of an elaborate system of band-sawing, to do the heavier kinds of work. A considerable saving in raw material was the first result, and many varieties of wood not in use at that time were successfully introduced. After this, steam-power was applied to turning, joining, varnish-making, and ultimately embraced the whole trade.

Although greatly developing the resources and extent of the business side of the trade, the innovation has certainly not improved the quality of work produced, neither has it raised the moral or material condition of the workmen. The reasons of this are (1) That by reason of the increased keenness of competition consequent on improved means of production, prices have gone down, and quality also in exact proportion; (2) That wages have declined in proportion as prices have fallen; and (3) That quality being adapted to the ruling prices, the workmen are satisfied with inferior results of their labour as compared with former times. Taken altogether, the trade seems quite different from that of twenty years ago. There is a larger and more varied supply of raw material, which in turn causes a more than ever bewildering variety of sticks in the market. The margin of profit is much smaller, and very difficult to obtain, as some considerable credit has to be given. The most rigid economy prevails almost everywhere, and the division and subdivision of labour are more minute and exact than ever. Foreign competition is not very formidable. A not inconsiderable quantity of finished sticks have been imported from Austria and Germany, at different times; but, as a rule, the finish of the work is not up to the English market. The

process of refinishing has mostly to be performed by English workmen before such sticks are saleable here. The Austrian sticks have many excellent qualities; but the main fault will be best understood by saying, The ship has been spoiled for a halfpenny worth of tar.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE recent eclipse of the sun seems to have been observed under the most favourable conditions by the different expeditions equipped for the purpose. The weather is described by Professor Pickering in a telegram from Minasaris as being perfect, and the results of his observations as satisfactory. Four immense streamers stretched for a distance of nearly half a million miles from the corona, and several solar prominences attained great distinctness and brilliancy. There was every evidence that the general condition of the sun was one of great disturbance, and a large number of spots were apparent. A comparison of the photographs taken at the various stations is looked forward to with great interest, and it is believed that the solar eclipse of 1893 will be a memorable one.

An *ærolite* is said to have fallen lately at St Louis, Missouri, breaking off the left arm of the statue erected in honour of John Brown, the well-known martyr to the cause of the abolition of slavery. It is further stated that Professor Josphir has analysed the stone, and has found that twenty-five per cent. of it consists of an unknown metal. If this report be true, and certainly it seems definite enough, we shall probably hear a good deal more of this messenger from starry space.

Experiments in freeing potable water from micro-organisms have recently been described in a German technical paper. The inquirers first of all reported some previous experiments in the simple addition of alum to water, a single grain of this compound to a gallon of water reducing the number of organisms in fifteen drops from eight thousand one hundred to eighty. Using larger quantities of alum, they were able to reduce the water to an absolutely sterile liquid. Another experimenter has detailed his investigations in the purification of water by sedimentation, and shows that during the storage of water in large reservoirs a natural bacterial purification takes place. Here is one of the results obtained: Thames water before being admitted to the reservoir of one of the London water companies was found to contain in every twenty-five drops 1437 microbes. These were reduced to 318 after the water had had time to rest; and after further rest in a second reservoir the number was reduced to 177. It has been long ago pointed out that the water of rivers undergoes a natural purification, and this, no doubt, is due to sedimentation.

We suppose that no habit has been more severely condemned and written against than that of opium-smoking. Now and then a

traveller has argued that the habit is not nearly so harmful as most persons imagine it to be, and they have actually asserted that it is not without beneficial effects. In a recent number of the 'Asiatic Quarterly Review,' Dr Nightingale speaks in defence of opium-smoking; and as the conclusions at which he has arrived are the result of personal experience obtained among the Chinese themselves, they are certainly worthy of consideration. He alleges that opium-smoking has the effect of warding off fevers and of allaying their effects, that it enables Chinamen to endure fatigue and perform heavy work in a high temperature which no other race of men would be capable of; and that it does not make its habitué quarrelsome, as alcohol does its victim in Western climes. He concludes that the more the matter is studied, the less harmful does the drug seem to be. If this writer's conclusions are correct, we are once more reminded of the advantage of looking at both sides of a question.

In California there is a six-mile tramway line which connects a certain town with a mountainous country in its vicinity, and on this tram line the curious spectacle may be seen of the horses riding on the cars. They first of all pull the car and its passengers up the steep gradient, and the car then finds its way back to town by gravity; and as it would be a useless waste of energy for the horses to run by its side, they are accommodated with a small platform at the back of the car. It is said that when they have an extra heavy load to pull up, they will frequently stop and make an effort to change places with the passengers.

News concerning the Antarctic whaling expedition which left Dundee many months ago has been received in that town. The four ships engaged in the enterprise failed in finding the valuable black whale of which they were in search, although they diligently scoured the ground where, according to Sir James Clark Ross, the animal used to be common. But seals were found in such abundance that between them the fleet secured no fewer than sixteen thousand pelts and a large quantity of oil. The absence of the black whale is attributed to the presence of its formidable enemy, the grampus. The seal-skins are said to be of unusual size; but it is impossible to appraise their value until later on. The weather encountered was most severe, and had the fleet been more favoured in this respect, an attempt would have been made to get farther south.

An interesting Report upon Jade in Upper Burma has been issued by Dr Noetling, of the Indian Geological Survey. There are, it seems, two different kinds of jade-mines—the quarry mines, which are on the summit of a hill, and the river mines. In the latter, the green stone is found in boulders in the river bed, and trained men dive for it. But in the hill quarries a wasteful and destructive method is adopted for winning the hard stone from its native rock. The rock is heated by means of large fires, and at night the cold is sufficient to crack it in all directions, after which wedges and crowbars are used to force the jade from its bed. Dr Noetling points to jade as being an example of a thing which is highly prized by the Chinese and Burmese, and is almost valueless to others. The

Chinese will pay for a piece of good jade as much as if it were gold, but there is no market for it outside China and Burma. With scientific appliances and the use of dynamite, the output of the mines could be enormously increased; but under present conditions the supply of jade is likely to diminish.

Some curious experiments have recently been carried out at Brest, having for their object the creation artificially of volumes of smoke, under the cover of which a torpedo boat can approach a hostile ship without being itself visible. The idea seems to be impracticable; but it has been considered worthy of protection by a patent, and its inventor, M. Oriolle, of Nantes, is confident of ultimate success, albeit he speaks of 'the consequences which may follow upon the discovery of a sure means of producing smoke or fog of sufficient stability and permanence.' It is singular that one set of warlike inventors should be busy upon the problem of doing away with smoke, while another is looking for a sure means of producing it in large quantities.

Some months ago, Mr Van der Weyde, the well-known London photographer, announced that he had invented a new apparatus, which he called the Photo Corrector, the object of which was to diminish the size of the head, hands, feet, or any other portion of a portrait, so as to correct any exaggeration which might easily be brought about by a too forward position of the sitter with respect to the camera. The means he employs is a supplementary lens of peculiar construction placed within the camera, close against the sensitive plate. This lens grasps, as it were, the light rays composing the part of the image needing correction, and while squeezing them into smaller compass, diminishes the size of the object. The idea is most ingenious.

A new and exceedingly useful application of the electric motor is exhibited in the 'Electrical Deck Planer,' which has been designed by Mr Malcolm Sutherland, of Dumbarton. This useful machine has the outward appearance of a lawnmower, for it is pushed forward by a double handle, and has at its lower part a quickly revolving cutter, which, however, can be adjusted in height at will. The purpose of the invention, as its name implies, is to plane down decks and floors of all kinds, an operation which when performed with an ordinary hand-plane is very hard work, necessitating a cramped position for the labourer. The cutter in this instance is geared to an electro motor, and revolves at a speed of three thousand revolutions per minute. The machine borrows its power from a stationary dynamo, to which it is attached by flexible cables.

The New York 'Engineering Journal' recently published some interesting particulars concerning the employment of the metal platinum. The consumption of the metal for manufacturing purposes has increased from an insignificant quantity in 1880 to fifty-five thousand ounces last year. The increase is due, firstly, to the amount used in the manufacture of electric lamps. A large quantity is also employed yearly in the construction of stills for the concentration of sulphuric acid. For the attachment of artificial teeth to their supporting plates, platinum wire is used exclusively, and this industry uses many thou-

sands of ounces annually. Jewellers, chemists, opticians, and others also find uses for platinum; and of recent years a large quantity has been applied to the production of permanent photographs. The Siberian Urals have hitherto supplied ninety-two per cent. of all the platinum used in the world; but now Colombia, British Columbia, and the United States are competing with Russia in its production.

A well-known naturalist and Arctic traveller, Colonel Fielden, has suggested that the musk ox might with advantage be introduced into the Highlands of Scotland, where he believes it would thrive as well as it does in higher latitudes. This animal is covered in the winter-time with a long-stapled, light-yellow wool, as fine as silk, in addition to its coat of hair; and from this wool, stockings and other articles of clothing could be made, which would rival silk in softness and beauty. The animal is very easily tamed and reared; and Colonel Fielden says that they could be caught in any numbers in Jameson's Land.

Visiting cards are being made of iron with the owner's name printed upon them in silver. These cards are so thin that forty of them placed one upon the other are said to have a thickness of only one-eighth of an inch—each thin enough, we should imagine, to represent a very keen cutting edge.

We noted, some months back, several improvements which had been made in the Welsbach Incandescent Gaslight, in which, it will be remembered, a 'mantle' of incombustible mineral matter is suspended in the flame of a Bunsen burner, becoming white-hot. A battery of these lamps has recently been employed by Mr Treble, of Clapham (London), for photographic portraiture, and the light given is of such a highly actinic quality that it is possible to secure a picture at night in about five seconds. This new method of taking photographs in the absence of daylight is likely to become a favourite one, for the lamps give off no disagreeable fumes, and are cheap both in installation and maintenance.

Among the many methods in vogue for domestic decoration there is, perhaps, nothing more cosy and artistic than the old oak panelling with which our forefathers lined their rooms. Like many another good old fashion, this one has of late years been revived; and in houses of the better sort, panelled walls can now often be seen. As the work is far too expensive for general adoption, a modified process, patented by Messrs English Brothers, of Peterborough, by which the same effect is produced at about half the cost, is of some interest. This new panelling is in reality a thin veneer, which is associated with a cheaper wood. It can be screwed to rough deal fillets nailed to the walls; and great variety can be obtained by employing bird's-eye maple and other artistic woods in juxtaposition.

Coal which costs eighty-three pounds per ton to raise from the earth seems to be somewhat of a curiosity, yet that is the actual cost of raising from the Abram Collieries, Wigan, a huge block of cannel coal weighing over twelve tons, which is intended for the World's Fair at Chicago. Nine months were occupied in hewing out this monstrous lump of fuel, after which it was boxed up in planks and sent by train to Liverpool for

shipment to Boston. The cost price quoted does not include the expense of transport; and it is quite likely that before this 'black diamond' reaches its destination it will figure up to more than one hundred pounds per ton.

Electric lighting, which has already become so common, is expected to receive an enormous impetus as soon as the patents referring to the incandescent lamps and their belongings shall lapse, for their present price is out of all proportion to their actual cost. The price will also be still further reduced if a certain vacuum pump for exhausting the air from the little glass lamp-bulbs answers the expectations raised concerning it. This pump is the invention of Adolph Berrenberg, and is said to be in successful operation. In one hour it will exhaust six hundred lamps simultaneously, quite half this time being occupied in extracting the occluded gases from the carbon filaments. Hitherto, pumps have been used for this purpose which are very much slower in their action, and which are only capable of operating upon half-a-dozen lamps at one time.

The Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to inquire into the plague of field-voles in Scotland (of which we gave a full account in *Chambers's Journal* of June 25, last year) have recently sent in their Report. They estimate that more than one hundred thousand acres were affected by the pest, and that this visitation can be traced back to the year 1888. These little animals are so prolific, that under favourable conditions they increase most rapidly; and one cause of the outbreak is found in the favourable character of the seasons since the date above mentioned. Autumns have been wet, producing great luxuriance of grass on the hills, which afforded shelter to the voles; while winters, severe enough in England, have been mild in Scotland. A second cause for the plague is found in the destruction of hawks, buzzards, owls, stoats, and weasels by owners of game-preserves. All the witnesses examined by the Committee agree that the above are the main causes of the increase of voles. The damage done to the pastures is enormous, the habit of the vole being to eat the stem of the grass close to the ground, leaving the upper part to wither. This destruction of pasture naturally affects the rearing of stock most seriously. The Committee are reluctantly led to the conclusion that they are unable to recommend any specific method of dealing with or putting an end to the present outbreak; but at the same time they mention a number of remedies which in certain cases have proved effectual in diminishing the number of voles, and it cannot be said that their work has been altogether in vain.

Another bullet-proof fabric is presently to form the subject of experiments before a military Commission. In this case, the inventor does not claim that the material will be suitable for clothing, but he maintains that it will be useful in the construction of light portable screens, which will be quite capable of preventing a bullet reaching its billet. The inventor is Herr Syländer, of Pressburg.

M. Herrmann, the well-known conjurer, has been writing to an American journal concerning the wonderful feats attributed by travellers to

Indian jugglers. He once regarded India as the Mecca of magicians, and he went there in quest of knowledge. Most wofully was he disappointed. All the well-known tricks which have been retailed again and again, he expatiates upon. Some are simply travellers' tales; and he never saw them performed. The others can be very much better done by many a European prestidigitateur on his platform. The Indian juggler, he tells us, never advances, and never originates. Their tricks are clumsily performed, and of the most primitive kind. Thus ends one more of our childhood's illusions.

It has long been the custom to describe a very copious downpour as 'raining cats, dogs, and pitchforks,' and one of our greatest caricaturists, George Cruikshank, long ago gave the whimsical idea pictorial illustration. But romance and exaggeration have once more been outdone by reality. In a storm which occurred in New South Wales in October last, a reliable observer writes that 'substantial brick buildings came tumbling in all directions, and the air was full of iron tubs, galvanised iron, and tins of every description.' Hailstones fell in abundance, and many of them measured more than six inches in diameter. They slew sheep, kangaroo-rats, and birds, and the dead bodies were lying thickly on the fields. But the size and force of these terrible missiles will be better appreciated when it is mentioned that the hailstones made large holes in corrugated iron roofs. Trees twelve feet in circumference were snapped off by the winds as if they had been twigs. This terrible storm was described in all its details in a paper read before the Royal Society of New South Wales by Mr H. C. Russell, in November last.

A German process for depositing upon cotton cloth a brilliant and flexible coating of metallic tin is described as follows: Powdered zinc is made into a paste with white of egg, and is brushed into the surface of the cloth, the albumen being afterwards coagulated by a current of super-heated steam. The cloth is next immersed in a bath of perchloride of tin, when the metal deposits in a finely divided condition upon the cloth, which is afterwards dried, and passed through a calendering machine. Very fine designs can be transferred to cloth in this way, and the invention is likely to meet with many applications.

In a recent article in *Chambers's Journal* (p. 116) on 'A Brazilian Convict Island,' it was stated that between 1884 and 1891 no British ship had visited the island of Fernando de Noronha. Mention was made of the 'Challenger's' visit in 1873, when permission to collect specimens of the fauna and flora of the island was refused. This, however, as we are kindly informed by a correspondent, was done with great success in 1887 by Mr H. N. Ridley, F.L.S., now Superintendent of the Botanical Gardens at Singapore. His party, of which our correspondent was a member, stayed for six weeks on the island, and explored the natural history as thoroughly as was possible, obtaining some fifty species new to science, and a full record of the geology and petrology of the place. The expedition was sent out under the auspices of the Royal Society and the British Museum; and the results of its labours

were published in the following year by the Linnean Society, the reports extending over 190 pages of that Society's Journal. A paper, with a map of the island, will also be found in the Royal Geographical Society's Journal, 1888.

A LEGEND OF NIAGARA.

IN the vast continent known as North America, there still exist, though in a degraded and debased condition, the descendants of a once free and proud people. Originally the undisputed possessors of their rich and fertile country, their inheritance has dwindled; and now only a small territory remains. For, before the indomitable industry—and it is to be feared the overbearing oppression also of the white man—the Red Indian has been compelled to withdraw his claim to his patrimony. No doubt, however, the mischief has been aided by his incorrigible idleness, and a fatal fondness for the 'fire-water' of the stranger. But the legend I have to relate has to do, not with the degenerate posterity, but with their brave and noble ancestors.

Many hundred moons ago, there dwelt on the shores of the great fresh-water lakes a branch or tribe of this nation. They were a brave and warlike race; and dwelling in a district which was well stocked with bison, deer, and other animals, by the chase of which they chiefly subsisted; and possessing other advantages by their proximity to the lakes, they were, perhaps, the most powerful of the tribes into which their nation was divided. They were noted for the courage and skill of their 'braves,' as the young warriors were called, and they were no less famous for the beauty and modesty of their maidens. The fame also of their wise men, the elders of the tribe, had spread through the land, and many another tribe envied them their firm and gentle governance.

Among the young men of the tribe, none was more highly esteemed by its elders than Ahdeck, the son of the chief. Brave, handsome, and kind-hearted, he was the beloved of the people. The young braves followed him on the war-path or to the chase with confidence; and many a bashful glance beamed from bright eyes, as Ahdeck, returning from the chase, passed by where the matrons of the tribe instructed the maidens in the simple arts of their nation. It was felt by all that when Gitche Manito (the Great Spirit) called away the old chief to the happy hunting-grounds, he would leave a capable successor behind him.

But if Ahdeck was the leader of the young braves, among the maidens no superior was acknowledged to Nokomis; lithe and agile as the mountain deer, her countenance—to use an Indian metaphor—was like the full moon. Among the youth of the opposite sex, a smile or a word from Nokomis was sufficient for a day's happiness. But gradually despondency spread among the young braves, as it became whispered about that the brave Ahdeck himself had fallen a victim to the innocent wiles of the winsome Nokomis. And who could hope to successfully compete with Ahdeck? The trophies of his skill and courage were laid by him at the feet of Nokomis; and the Indian maid's dark cheek glowed as she saw the meaning smiles of her

companions. But many a young brave was heart-sick for love of the dark-tressed Nokomis.

Now the time came round when a solemn annual festival was wont to be held by this tribe. Dwellers by the great lakes, and living within the ceaseless sound of the thundering cataract, great was their veneration for the Spirit of the Falls. And it had been declared by an ancient wise man that only so long as an awful annual tribute was paid, would the powerful Spirit continue to protect them. Therefore, it was the custom annually for the maidens of the tribe to draw lots; and the chosen one seated in a canoe gaily bedecked with fruit and flowers, floated down the river to meet certain destruction at the Falls. As this festival drew nigh, anxious depression filled the mind of Nokomis. Every year, as long as she could remember, a young and innocent maiden had been sacrificed in this manner. What if she drew the fatal lot? In vain did Ahdeck attempt to comfort his betrothed; the soul of the Indian girl was filled with dark forebodings of coming sorrow. Just as her life had reached its goal of happiness, the dark shadow of approaching grief hung threateningly before her. As Ahdeck wandered at night beneath the silvery birch-trees on the banks of the river, his heart sickened with anguish at the thought of the possible end to his hopes; and he formed the stern resolution that if Nokomis died, it should not be alone.

The fatal day drew rapidly nearer: at last it arrived. The maidens of the tribe were gathered around Nokomis, weeping, for, alas! the lot had been taken, and the beloved of Ahdeck was to die! Not to Nokomis had Ahdeck breathed a word of his resolve. And to neither of them had the thought of flight suggested itself; or if it had, only to be instantly dismissed as unworthy of an Indian.

The whole tribe was assembled on the bank of the river. All hearts were filled with sorrow and anguish, but none thought of violating the dreadful custom. To their simple minds, any deviation would have meant ruin, irretrievable and inevitable ruin for the whole tribe. It was a splendid autumnal dawn. A blaze of colour was on the foliage as the warm sun shed its beams over the far-reaching woods. To Ahdeck, nature seemed to mock him. How could the birds sing matins on such a day! He shuddered as he gazed upon the treacherous water, that rippled and dimpled in the early morning sunlight as if nothing unusual was about to happen, and thought how soon Nokomis would be lying stiff and lifeless beneath the waves!

Slowly the maiden drew near the bank, attended by her weeping friends. She was attired in white, her dark hair garlanded with the rich red autumn leaves. The last agonising farewells were made; but Ahdeck was absent. With piteous eyes, Nokomis looked around for him; but he was gone, and with a breaking heart, she stepped into the frail boat—which was decked with the gayest flowers that could be found—the hapless victim of an ignorant superstition. The priest of the tribe drew his knife and cut the rope that held the canoe to the shore, and slowly but with gathering speed it launched out into the current of the rapid flowing stream. The people gazed.

But see! another canoe has thrust out from

the bank, impelled by a vigorous arm. It is Ahdeck. The elders gaze anxiously. Is he about to rescue her! Then would they fear the wrath of the malevolent Spirit! But such is not his purpose. Swiftly he overtakes the canoe in which the unhappy girl is kneeling. With a cry of joy she welcomes him as he steps into her canoe; and hand clasped in hand, they float down the river, cheerfully acquiescing in the fate that permits them to die together. Swiftly and yet more swiftly they approach the frightful fall: one sudden swoop, and it is over! The awe-struck spectators peer fearfully into the deep dark pool beneath. For a minute the mingled tresses of the devoted pair are seen to dance on the white foam, and then disappear for ever.

It is not easy to describe the effect of the tragedy. Accustomed to the yearly tribute, the tribe had callously grown indifferent to the suffering involved. But now, the blank left by the death of Ahdeck and his bride made indifference impossible. Before the next festival came round, the camp was moved, and for many years the Falls were avoided. When they finally returned, the custom was never renewed. Not in vain had the lovers died!

Indian lovers, however, wandered on the river banks as before, and talked of the unhappy fate of Ahdeck and Nokomis, and glancing timidly at the deep blue sky above, pointed out to one another the bright twin-stars which appeared overhead at harvest-time; and told how the Great Spirit had taken compassion upon Ahdeck and Nokomis, and snatching them out of the cruel water, had placed them in the sky, for ever to adorn the bright heavens.

SONNET.—IN ILLNESS.

They also serve who only stand and wait.

MILTON.

'THE broken threads of life's all-tangled skein
I will take up when I am better!' So

The heart, hope-prompted, cries when that we grow
Each day more frail in illness, and the pain
Of dull inaction, knowing that but vain

Th' attempt to rouse the prostrate powers that now

No more their wonted active vigour show,

As if some palsying hand on them had lain!

Ah, it may be that in life's evening hours

The discipline is not to do, but *be*;

To know the broken threads no longer ours

To weave and fashion; and resignedly

To fold the hands—that wait the amaranth flowers

To clasp—in humble faith contentedly!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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SMAILHOLM TOWER.

A FEW miles north of the Tweed, in Roxburghshire, on an outcrop of trap rock nearly seven hundred feet above the level of the sea, stands the ancient and classic keep of Smailholm. It is seen from all the country round, standing, as Dr John Brown puts it, 'stark and upright as a warder.' It has two claims upon the interest of the literary reader. It was the witness of some entertaining episodes in the early life of Scott, and it was the scene of his strangely weird and eerie ballad 'The Eve of St John.'

Smailholm, more than the site of College Wynd in Edinburgh where Scott was born, and more than George Square where he was brought up, is closely associated with certain features of Sir Walter's life, because he, in his Autobiography, has recalled many graphic details of the period of his young life which he spent there. The rock on which Smailholm Tower is built is called Sandyknowe Crags, and near by stands Sandyknowe Farm. This farm was the birthplace of Sir Walter's father, and the residence in Scott's youth of his grandfather, Robert Scott. The 'Author of Waverley' was, as every one knows, a cripple—tall and strong and well built, but yet lame—the lameness being due to an inequality of the lower limbs. He had not, however, been born so. It was not till his eighteenth month that he was attacked by some kind of paralytic affection, which left him permanently lame. 'One night,' he says, 'I have been often told, I showed great reluctance to be caught and put to bed, and after being chased about the room, was apprehended and consigned to my dormitory with some difficulty. It was the last time I was to show such personal agility.' Next morning he was found to be affected with fever, and on the fourth day afterwards the melancholy discovery was made that the child had lost the power of his right leg.

It was in the hope that the boy, with his naturally good constitution, would throw off the partial paralysis, that he was sent to breathe the

free air of the country at his grandfather's high-lying farm of Sandyknowe. He was then about his third year, and it is characteristic of the wonderful powers of memory which he manifested in his mature years, that he so vividly recalls many episodes of his existence when but three years of age. 'It is here,' he says, 'at Sandyknowe, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies resorted to, to aid my lameness, some one had recommended that as often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family, I should be stripped, and swathed up in the skin warm as it was flayed from the carcass of the animal. In this Tartar-like habiliment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlour in the farmhouse, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl.' A neighbour and relation, old Sir George MacDougal of Makerstoun, in his cocked-hat and scarlet waistcoat, used also to assist on these occasions by getting down on his knees and dragging his watch across the carpet to induce the child to follow it. 'The benevolent old soldier,' as Scott remarks, 'and the infant wrapped in his sheep-skin, would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators.'

The boy being a favourite with the servants, was often carried up to the crags on which the old tower stands by his grandfather's shepherd or ewe-milkers, and here first dawned upon him some consciousness of the strange world that lay around him. In manhood, when he was writing 'Marmion,' he tells us how the remembrance of those early days and the tales he then heard still roused his feelings and glowed in his verse:

Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy's wakening hour. . . .
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green. . . .

I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its rounds surveyed;
And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work of human power.

It is difficult to estimate the influences which such a scene had upon the dawning consciousness of the boy, and almost useless to speculate about them. Genius works out its own ends, and scatters its riches where it wills. Other boys had wandered about those crags, and no doubt wondered, as Scott did, at the great tower, with its black blank window-spaces, its long winding stair, its battlemented summit, its ironed doorway; and yet no strange thing thereby wrought in their brain. But to Scott it was precisely the environment in which the germ of genius within him could best fructify and ripen. The barren scene, the naked cliffs, the gaunt and empty tower—these, at first thought, looked but little qualified to excite the emotions or to fire the imagination. 'Yet,' says Scott—

Yet was poetic impulse given
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.

This 'poetic impulse' is indeed as the wind—we know not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.

If you would visit this spot in the uplands of the Merse sacred to the childhood of the Great Magician, it may be done either from Kelso or Dryburgh. It is a walk of seven miles either way, and as many more back. The most picturesque way is by Dryburgh, in which case the traveller by the Waverley Route leaves the train at St Boswells Station, lying under the very shadow of the Eildons. A walk of a mile brings you to the Tweed, here spanned by a foot-bridge, and giving a glimpse of the river as it sweeps down from Old Melrose and Bemersyde, and plunges beneath the red cliffs on which the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey stand. And here, in passing, you may pause and turn aside by that ivy-mantled wall, which leads you along a winding path between the shining boles of overhanging beeches, and there before you is the beautiful fragment of St Mary's Aisle, which holds within its solemn precincts the sacred dust of Scott. Let us recall that sombre September day—'tis now sixty years since—when he was borne thither to his final rest.

'The courtyard,' says Lockhart, 'and all the precincts of Abbotsford, were crowded with uncovered spectators as the procession was arranged; and as it advanced through Darnick and Melrose, and the adjacent villages, the whole population appeared at their doors in like manner, almost all in black. The train of carriages extended over more than a mile—the Yeomanry followed in great numbers on horseback—and it was late in the day when we reached Dryburgh. Some accident, it was observed, had caused the hearse to halt for several minutes on the summit of the hill at Bemersyde—exactly where a prospect of remarkable richness opens, and where Sir Walter had always been accustomed to rein up his horse. The day was dark and lowering, and the wind

high. The wide enclosure at the Abbey of Dryburgh was thronged with old and young; and when the coffin was taken from the hearse, and again laid on the shoulders of the afflicted serving-men, one deep sob burst from a thousand lips. Mr Archdeacon Williams read the Burial Service of the Church of England; and thus, about half-past five in the evening, the remains of Sir Walter Scott were laid by the side of his wife in the sepulchre of his ancestors—"in sure and certain hope."

This old abbey where we now are, is one of the most picturesque ruins in Borderland. The green plateau on which it stands is half encircled by the full-flowing Tweed; and the many aged trees—oak and ash and melancholy yew—planted by hands that have long since mouldered in the churchyard dust, give an aspect of serene awe and beauty to the place. Around the ruins, underneath the scattered headstones of the graveyard, reposes the common dust of common men; but here, in St Mary's Aisle, is the granite cenotaph that covers the sleeping-place of him who yet liveth, and shall live for evermore.

But let us leave him here in his dreamless sleep, and seek the heights where the tower of Smailholm stands. Thither, there are more roads than one; but any native will point out the hill road by Mertoun Mill, and near Mertoun House, in which Scott wrote 'The Eve of St John'—leading amid umbrageous trees down to the Tweed, where it sweeps along in unbroken majesty. It is an old road that thence runs upwards, with deep ruts and long-untended roadway, rough with stones. It reminds one of an English lane, with its steep banks on either side, rich with the summer's greenest grass, long and wind-shaken, and thickly set with wild-flowers. Upwards it runs, now between high hedgerows, and now beneath the dark shadow of scented firs, till, after an hour and more, you come out on the high moor at the back of Smailholm Crag, and there, before you in the distance, is the old tower, looking more than ever bare and barren after the rich peninsula of Dryburgh, its rocky site led up to by stretches of bog-land and stunted heath—a dreary wilderness, brown, desolate, wind-smitten.

When the castle itself is reached, it is found to be a tall and narrow Border keep of the conventional type of the sixteenth century. It was built by one of the Pringles, in the days when the Pringles were a numerous and powerful sept in the Merse and by Tweedside. The tower stands at one corner of the courtyard, or 'barmkin;' but only a fragment of the inclosing walls remains. There are also some vestiges of a small chapel. The tower itself is intact. Unlike Bemersyde Tower, which otherwise it closely resembles, Smailholm has only one vaulted room—namely, that on the ground-floor. Usually the roof of the hall on the first floor is arched over, or vaulted, also; but in Smailholm the ceiling of the hall must have been a flat one of oaken beams, the stone supports for which on each side still exist. The tower is accessible on three sides of the sloping ascent; but on the fourth or south side, its site terminates just under the walls in a precipice of rock, at the foot of which lies a gloomy and stagnant lochlet of brown bog-water. Beyond this, a few hundred yards down the

southern slope of the hill, stands the farm of Sandyknowe, which we have just alluded to as the scene of Scott's infantile recollections, and all around are the rocks and crags and patches of velvety green as they impressed themselves on his childish imagination.

But the mystic spell which hangs about the old keep is not due either to its historical associations—for these are of the meagrest—or to its immediate surroundings, which are commonplace, though wild. That spell is due to 'The Eve of St John.' Scott wrote this ballad in 1799 at Mertoun House, and the subject was suggested to him half in jest. He had been urging his relative and host, Lord Polwarth, to make certain repairs upon Smailholm Tower, which was in parts dilapidated. His lordship assented, on the condition, half playfully made, that Scott should write a ballad of which Smailholm should be the scene. Scott agreed. Up to this time, though he was then twenty-eight years of age, Scott had not written anything of notable merit. He had made a few rhymed translations, and composed a few fragments in ballad style; but, under the inspiration of Smailholm, and his early reminiscences of it, he struck out at once, in 'The Eve of St John,' a piece of genuine ballad poetry, deeply infused with weird and wild imaginings, heightened by the gloomy and eerie imagery that well befitted the dark superstition embodied in its verse. Never, in all his writings, did Scott again touch so deep a note of unholy glamour, except perhaps in that fearful episode in 'Redgauntlet,' written twenty-five years later—'Wandering Willie's Tale'—as enthralling and blood-chilling a story of the supernatural as was ever uttered, its lurid horrors lighted up by an occasional gleam of humour that does not make the reader laugh, only deepens the spell of nameless terror in which he is held bound. Let any one who is fascinated with the artificial supernaturalism and wonder-mongering of certain of our modern novelists, lay these later efforts for a moment aside, and once more turn to Letter the Eleventh in 'Redgauntlet,' and read in its proper setting 'Wandering Willie's Tale.'

The view from the top of Smailholm Tower is one of the most far-reaching and magnificent in the south of Scotland—from the sea at Berwick-on-Tweed on the east to the far hills of Ettrick and Yarrow on the west; from the Lammermoors on the north to the blue girdle of the Cheviots that shut in the southern borders of Teviotdale. You can still enter the tower-gate as did the Baron of Smailholm, and mount the narrow stair to the bartizan-seat; and though you will not there find the lady, 'with maids that on her wait,' you can yet look as she looked 'over hill and vale.'

O'er Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

On your right is the Watchfold, where the beacon-lights were wont to blaze out their stormy warnings, and where the Lady of Smailholm held unholy tryst; and behind you is 'the rocky way' which 'leads to Brotherstone,' by which the vengeful Baron, 'without stop or stay,' rode forth on his revengeful quest. Standing on the summit of Smailholm you can see the Borderland as perhaps it cannot be seen from any other given

point, with its richly-mingling hill and vale, wood and stream, all heightened by the charm of old associations, and illumined by the light that was never yet on sea or land.

J. R.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.—WHAT WILL SHE DO WITH IT?

NEXT day there commenced a new epoch in Isabel's life. Her uncle came early, as he had promised, and at once opened his business to her.

'Well, my dear,' said he, 'poor Uncle Harry's gone, and he couldn't take his hard-won brass with him. To do him justice, he was not the kind of man that wanted to; he knew he'd have to leave it—though he hoped to enjoy it a little longer himself—and, to do him justice again, knowing he had it to leave, my dear, he fixed on the best heir to it that he could have chosen. I know that, my girl, because I saw the will when it was drawn up, and I am set down in it as executor. And who, do you think now, my lady, he has appointed his heir?'

'It would be absurd,' said Isabel, turning very pale, 'to pretend, uncle, that I don't know what you mean, and whom you mean, and that I don't now understand what you were hinting at yesterday. But I think you must be mistaken.'

'No mistake at all,' said Mr Suffield. 'You're his heir, my girl—and the best he could have chosen.'

'Still, uncle dear,' persisted Isabel, 'I would not be too sure about it. It was some weeks ago—was it not?—that he made that will; and things have happened since then: he was made angry and disappointed; he may have made another will that you don't know of.'

'Another will?' exclaimed Suffield, blushing with indignation. 'He wouldn't do such a thing! No, no. His property is all personal, and you've come into the enjoyment of it, to the tune of three or four thousand a year.'

'Three or four thousand a year?' exclaimed Mr Raynor, who had listened with interest, but unmoved until now. 'Has Harry made all that?'

'He has, John,' answered Suffield: 'coined it out of his brains and blood, you may say.'

Mr Raynor looked deeply envious an instant, then his brow cleared, and he rose and came to his daughter and took both her hands in his.

'I congratulate you, my child,' said he, in a voice that thrilled with emotion. 'I have not been able to provide for you as I ought; but I rejoice exceedingly that it has been reserved for one of my own blood to provide for you so nobly. That, to my mind, reflects a generous lustre back over Harry's whole life.'

'What?' said Suffield. 'Did you find Harry's life needed something of that sort, then, John? —But we had better not discuss it. We must go to the lawyer's, my dear, to see the details of the thing.'

'I am ashamed,' said Isabel, 'that we should be talking of it at all now! It seems so dreadfully inhuman to be counting his gold over his dead body! Poor, dear Uncle Harry! I did nothing for him!—nothing at all!—that he should shower his wealth on me! Oh, I can't believe it's true! There *must* be a mistake!'

'You see, my dear,' said the practical Mr Suffield, 'he was bound to shower it on somebody—unless, of course, he left it to an institution; and Harry always thought more of persons than of institutions—as I do.—But you must come away with me and make sure about it.'

So Isabel set out with her uncle; and her father settled down to talk of these strange and surprising matters with Doughty, who had just come in. At the lawyer's it was found that Mr Suffield was right: that the will he spoke of existed, and that no other was known to exist. Unless, therefore, another will should be found among Uncle Harry's papers, when they came to be carefully examined, Isabel without doubt inherited all his property, with certain insignificant exceptions of small gratuities and presents bestowed here and there—notable among which was a legacy of fifty pounds to Daniel Trichinopoly.

A few days were enough to settle the point whether there was another will, and none being found, Isabel was, almost before she was aware, inducted into 'the usufruct' of her uncle's estate. It is not necessary to dwell on the details of this transition time. Two things only need be particularly mentioned: first, that she gave notice at the College for Ladies that she would not return there after the end of the term—she did that with great good-will, though she thereby made herself liable to a fine of a term's salary; for she was not of those who take delight in the drudgery of teaching—and, second, that she had a long talk with Alan Ainsworth concerning her new prospects and designs.

Alan, having heard of the death and burial of Mr Harry Raynor, had let a becoming interval elapse before calling again on his friends in the Marylebone lodgings. It thus happened that he chanced to call on the very evening before the day when Isabel and her father purposed to travel with the Suffields to the seaside. Mr Raynor—who sat alone with Alexander—at once opened the subject which in those days occupied much of his attention. Had Ainsworth heard of the extraordinary change in Isabel's lot? No; Mr Ainsworth had not. Not that she was the sole heir of Harry's property, and was now the recipient of something like three or four thousand pounds a year? No; Mr Ainsworth had not heard. And it might have been remarked, whether Mr Raynor remarked it or not, that while he made the admission Mr Ainsworth turned ghastly pale.

Then Isabel came in, and said she had been packing in view of their journey next day.

'And you were going,' said Ainsworth, 'without giving me an opportunity of saying "good-bye"?''

'I thought,' said she humbly, with a fresh touch of red on her cheek, 'since we had not seen you for some time, that you must be very busy, and would not care to be troubled: you have been very much occupied of late—have you not?'

'And,' said he, 'I understand you must have been very much occupied too: "The queen was in her parlour, counting up her money." You are now, I believe, the mistress of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice.'

'Oh,' said she, glancing towards her father with a slight contraction of her beautiful brows, 'my father has been telling you: he is full of the subject.'

'May I congratulate you?' said Ainsworth. 'I hope you will be happy in its possession, and I am sure you will spend it well.'

She looked at him frankly and half-sadly. 'You do not seem pleased,' said she, 'that it should have come to me.'

'Then,' said he, in his impulsive way, 'I am very ungenerous. But I *am* glad, truly glad, of your good fortune so far as it is good, and I hope you will be happy in spite of it.'—'You are going away,' he said, turning again suddenly to Isabel: 'if you can spare the time from your packing, let us all take a walk in the park, as we used to do. There will be no more walks when you return from your holiday; you will then be fully invested with your golden splendour, and nothing but carriage exercise must be thought of.'

'Yes,' said she; 'let us go into the park; but you must promise not to talk any more in that absurd strain.'

'I promise,' said he humbly.

Now it so happened that these two young people with the sincerest desire to be in accord were at cross-purposes of outlook. Ainsworth thought that Isabel's fortune now made all the difference in the world between them—and Mr Raynor had innocently emphasised that conclusion—while Isabel did not take her fortune into account as making any difference at all. The intent, therefore, of what each said to the other was a great deal misunderstood. Isabel saw that Ainsworth was disposed to make much of her altered circumstances, though she did not apprehend that he thought a gulf was now fixed between them, and she gaily and generously set herself to make him feel that she was the same Isabel as before, only with greater means to benefit her friends; while all these efforts to engage him in her interests Ainsworth took as more and more evidence that she was rejoicing in the new prospects that opened up for herself. He was very foolish; but remember he was at heart very sad and sore.

'I do verily believe,' said she, while her bright dark eyes sparkled as they stepped along together to the park, 'that you imagine I am going to turn all the gold poor Uncle Harry has left into a pedestal, and that I shall stand on top of it above all the common world I have known.'

'I suppose,' said he, 'that there is gold enough to make a pedestal of.'

'I daresay there is,' said she.

'I do think,' said he, 'that it is far too much for one person. What can one person do with so much?'

'Do?' she exclaimed mischievously. 'You do not seem to give me much credit for resource. First, I mean to spend a good deal on myself. I shall have as many new dresses as I like, and I shall get them made by the best dress-makers and the best tailors.'

'To attract,' said he, 'the attention of mankind all the day long!'

'Well, sir,' said she, 'and why not?'

'Why not, indeed?'

'But,' said she, 'you are wrong in thinking that a woman dresses to please men: she dresses chiefly to make other women envious.'

'Truly?' asked he, in his simplicity.

'Certainly,' said she. 'And then I mean to have a handsomely furnished flat: I have really very luxurious tastes.'

'Well,' said he, 'suppose all these personal expenses consume one of the thousands, what do you propose to do with the others?'

'There is my father,' said she seriously. 'And, really and truly, I confess that if it were not for him and for another purpose I have long thought of, I would rather, I think, not have the money: I would hand it over to my uncle, who has done so much for me, to whom I owe so much.'

'You would add water to the ocean,' said Ainsworth.

'Yes,' said she, 'it might look something like that. But I don't intend to do it. I have plans for my father that I cannot tell you about now. And then I have a great scheme which I used to dream about before there was any likelihood of my giving it practical shape: I want to make a Home for Aged Governesses. People have written about old donkeys: Dickens—or one of his young men—wrote an article about them once, as you know, of course, and asked what became of them; but no one has ever troubled to inquire about aged governesses, not even the parents of the children to whom they have been in place of parents. What becomes of them when they cannot play the part of parents any more? I don't know; but I wish to make sure that so many as I can entertain, who have no home of their own to go to, shall live in a big house I shall provide, where they will sometimes see younger governesses to remind them of past days—governesses who wish to take a holiday in town, or to look out for a situation.'

'Oh,' said Ainsworth, 'you would have your Home in London, then?'

'Certainly,' answered Isabel.

'Not at the seaside, or in the country?'

'Mr Ainsworth,' said Isabel, 'I did not think you would be so dull as not perceive my reasons for choosing London. Governesses have had enough in their lives of the seaside and the country; they are sick of the seaside and the country; and they do not need fresh air nearly so much as they need some wholesome excitement.'

'You are bent on giving them distractions and excitements, then?' said Ainsworth. 'That policy may have its advantage: you will kill them off quickly.'

'Really!' exclaimed Isabel, with a laugh, 'your misanthropy, or, rather, your misogyny, to-night is startling! But you are wrong again, Mr Ainsworth. Sufficient distraction and excitement are as necessary to civilised people as sufficient food—that, you must know, is the best scientific opinion—and my aged governesses shall have sufficient and no more, and so they shall prolong their days in the land. I'll make contracts with all managers of theatres'—

'Why not of music-halls?' interrupted Ainsworth.

'I must draw the line somewhere,' said Isabel; 'and I draw it there. The managers, I have no doubt, would be willing to quote reduced prices to a regular, and, as you may say, wholesale, customer.'

'I doubt very much if they would,' laughed Ainsworth—'especially to such a very wealthy person as you will be known to be.'

'Well,' said Isabel, 'let that pass; but I think I could prevail on them.'

'Oh,' exclaimed he, glancing with compulsory admiration at her noble and charming presence, 'if it comes to that, I have no doubt you could.'

'Then I should sometimes have Home dances. And you must come, Mr Ainsworth, and dance with my Aged.'

'I, Miss Raynor?' cried Ainsworth in abashed astonishment. 'I should be delighted, but I can't dance a bit!'

'Then, you must learn,' said she peremptorily.

'If I must, I must,' said he. 'When a great lady commands, she must be obeyed,' he added with a foolish and feeble touch of sarcasm.

'Of course,' said Isabel quietly, making the touch of sarcasm of none avail. 'And,' she continued, 'you must be one of my Committee of gentlemen. I don't know what I want a Committee for, since I intend to manage the Home myself; but it seems to be the regular and proper thing to have in such a case, and I intend to do all decently and in order.'

'Oh, a Committee,' laughed Ainsworth, 'need not interfere with your management. All it need do is to hear minutes, to propose, second, discuss, and accept or reject motions; and all you need do is to provide your Committee with a room to sit in, and a table to sit at, the table being furnished with a bottle of water and a tumbler.'

'And,' said she, 'Uncle George must be Chairman of Committee, and you must be Secretary. —Dear Uncle George! I should like to see him ruling the Committee with his gentle rod. He wouldn't say "Bo!" to the greatest goose or bore, for fear of hurting his feelings.'

'And what shall Mr Raynor and Alexander be?' asked Ainsworth.

'My father,' said Isabel with sudden seriousness, 'and Mr Doughty must be left out of this: I have other things in contemplation for them.'

Thus they talked and walked; and before they were quite aware, they were back again at the gate of the lodgings. Ainsworth refused to go in, but he lingered over his adieu to Isabel.

'I suppose,' said he, 'this is the last time I shall see you here. When you return to London, it will be to the luxurious flat and the splendid dresses; though I shall think of you,' said he with an instant's abandonment, 'as in these lodgings and in the dresses I know. I have behaved brutally to-night!' he exclaimed in a tremulous tone that startled and moved her. 'I have been very ungenerous! Forgive me!'

'Oh, no; don't say that!' said she, scarcely knowing what she said, but impulsively giving him her hand again.

'God bless you!' said he. He pressed her hand, and was gone with a lump in his throat.

And she thought that his feeling was only the tenderest friendship, and he thought that hers was pleasant preoccupation with the change in her affairs!

SOME FACTS ABOUT MARINE SURVEYING.

THE stranding of the battle-ship *Howe*, and subsequent court-martial on the Admiral commanding the Channel Squadron, has directed public attention in this country to the inaccuracy of the Spanish charts. This discovery not unnaturally led to a good deal of ignorant criticism of the Hydrographic Department of our own Admiralty, which in some quarters has been unduly censured for issuing those charts for the guidance of our own navigators. How far the department deserves blame in this matter need not here be discussed; but in view of the desirability of the vote for the Hydrographic Department being materially increased, it may be interesting briefly to describe the extent of the work carried out by our naval surveyors, and to give, from personal experience, some particulars of the mode in which a Marine Survey is conducted.

The whole of the charts of British territory, including of course our colonial possessions, are compiled by a handful of naval officers attached to the Hydrographic Department as volunteers. These officers—only fifty-three in number—are bona-fide naval officers, who have adopted this particular branch of the service, and who for the most part join it after attaining the rank of Lieutenant. The elements of marine surveying are now taught at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, through which every executive officer is required to pass before he is granted the rank of Sub-lieutenant; but it is not until after an officer actually joins the surveying service that he usually acquires any practical knowledge of the work, and the Commander of a surveying ship is required to train his junior officers personally. As regards the area that has to be surveyed by our Hydrographic Department, it is noteworthy that although nearly the whole of the coast-line of the civilised world has been at least partially examined, either by British or foreign surveyors, yet the enormous increase of sea-traffic renders it essential to re-survey every coast and harbour frequented by shipping; and consequently, the work is practically endless. A large portion of the Mediterranean has from time to time been surveyed by British vessels; the charts of the Red Sea are also English; and for the past twenty years one or more of our few surveying ships have been constantly employed on the coasts of China and Japan.

The eight surveying ships now in commission are distributed as follows: Three are constantly engaged, except in the winter, on the examination of the coasts and harbours of the British Isles; two are on the China coast; two in Australian waters; and one in the Mediterranean. There are also a few small hired vessels engaged in the survey of India and of the Newfoundland coast; but the deficiency of officers renders it absolutely impossible to maintain surveying ships elsewhere, and this is one of the points to which the attention

of Parliament is likely to be drawn at an early date.

Turning from generalities to particulars, it will be readily understood that the interest in a marine survey is usually greater when the area to be examined is new ground. There are still hundreds of miles of coast-line practically unsurveyed, or where the coast has been merely sketched in roughly. A vessel despatched to any of those districts has plenty of hard, but exceedingly interesting work before her. In such circumstances the first thing to be done is to ascertain the exact geographical position of the starting-point of the proposed survey, and this is usually accomplished by means of very careful observations, taken by practised officers. Observations of the sun are useless for this purpose, owing to the unavoidable errors of refraction, so that the position is invariably fixed by the stars. These observations are taken at a selected point on shore by means of an artificial horizon—that is, a small tank of mercury. Meanwhile, a base-line is carefully measured, one end of which is ultimately fixed—that is, its exact position is ascertained—by the star observations. The direction of this base-line, and its exact length, being also determined, the surveyor is thus enabled to draw a line on his blank chart, and from this single line the whole survey of the coast can be continued by triangulation. But the accuracy of the triangulation depends from first to last upon the measurement of the original base-line, so that the greatest care is necessary at the outset. After the triangulation has progressed to a small extent, errors can readily be discovered. Without going too much into details, it may be explained that triangulation is effected by means of the theodolite, a mathematical instrument by which vertical and horizontal angles can be taken with great nicety, and the use of which is easily learned. The same kind of instrument is used by land-surveyors; and for the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain one or two of unusual dimensions were constructed.

But to resume. For coast purposes a network of triangles is connected by means of these theodolite angles, and the positions of all prominent mountains visible from the sea are carefully set down. In some cases it may be necessary to send an officer and a party of men some miles inland for the purpose, and a difficult ascent may have to be made, as it is essential that the angles should be taken from the summit of the mountain. Sometimes on a clear day all the angles can be obtained in a few hours; but unless the atmosphere is clear, the party has to camp on the hill, and there remain until peaks farther up the coast come into view. The sailors, as a rule, greatly enjoy those tenting parties, and welcome such breaks in the monotony of a coast survey, and it is at such times that the ubiquitous character of the British seaman may best be studied. The men drag a tent up the mountain-side and pitch it somewhere near the summit, for the convenience of the officer in charge. They also have to take the necessary provisions, and sometimes fresh water in addition. Meanwhile, if there is any prospect of delay, the ship proceeds farther up the coast and lands similar small parties at other points. I thus spent a week on one occasion on a small barren rock on

the coast of China, together with four seamen and a marine servant; and our small stock of water was nearly exhausted before the ship was able to return to take us off. That, however, was regarded as quite an ordinary incident of a marine survey. On another occasion, a brother-surveyor, who was also landed on a small rock off the coast, had the unpleasant experience of being made a target of by a passing man-of-war. Needless to say the captain of the ship had no notion that the desolate-looking rock was temporarily occupied; but for an hour or more my friend and his men were in great peril, and only escaped destruction by crouching on the farther side of the rock while the shot and shell crashed against the diminutive island. Ultimately, the ship proceeded on her way without a soul on board having observed the angry and terrified surveyors.

The actual sounding is perhaps the most important work of the marine surveyor, although, as I have endeavoured to explain, this cannot be begun until after a variety of 'stations' on the coast have been fixed on the chart. The reason is this: the position of every sounding has to be accurately ascertained, and this can only be done by means of sextant angles. Thus, suppose the surveying ship to be running lines of soundings off some previously unsurveyed coast. She is running, perhaps, from a point above five miles seaward directly towards the land. The lead is dropped from the bows, and simultaneously two officers take angles to fix the ship's exact position. The bearings are laid off by means of an instrument termed the 'Station Pointer,' and at the point indicated the sounding is at once 'plotted' on the sheet. This process is repeated at short intervals; but it is not necessary to observe angles at every cast of the lead, as the vessel is kept on a straight course, and the speed being known, the soundings are divided between the points thus fixed every few minutes. These angles with the sextants, it will be understood, are taken between the hills or other prominent objects on shore, previously fixed by triangulation. When the soundings are regular, and shoal gradually as the coast is approached, it may usually be assumed that no hidden rocks lie in the immediate vicinity: but should the lead betray a sudden decrease of depth, the position of the ship is promptly ascertained, and a thorough examination of the neighbourhood has subsequently to be made. Pinnacle rocks are the most dangerous to navigation, and by far the most difficult to discover; but, strangely enough, a surveying ship is very rarely injured, as the constant use of the lead usually indicates a danger in sufficient time to avert disaster.

In a somewhat similar manner the inshore soundings are taken in the ship's boats. Here the work is necessarily carried out under greater difficulties, but the process of fixing the positions of the soundings is identical. Both ships and boats run parallel lines of soundings, the intervals between which have to be regulated according to the nature of the bottom and the anticipation of probable dangers. The boats can of course approach suspected rocks without risk; but as the ship cannot do this, she is principally employed when sufficient depth of water may reasonably be looked for. It is a fact insufficiently appreci-

ated even by nautical men that a marine chart, however carefully compiled, does not profess to indicate every hidden danger that may exist. There are necessarily intervals between the lines of soundings which cannot be examined, and it is only in frequented harbours that the marine surveyor is usually able to make so complete an examination as to justify the absolute confidence of the navigator in its accuracy. All coast charts have therefore to be used with discretion and with due regard to the possibility, not of actual errors, perhaps, but of errors of omission. Unfortunately, as I have said, this fact is insufficiently appreciated, and this is one of the reasons why ships are constantly wrecked even in the trade-routes of the world. I must not omit to mention the fact that the accuracy of the soundings is determined by careful tidal observations. To this end, tide-poles are erected whilst the sounding is in progress, and the rise and fall is noted for several weeks. The rise and fall is thus calculated; and, as a precautionary measure, the soundings set down on our charts indicate the least depth that will be found at any time—that is, at low-water ordinary spring-tides.

The actual production of the chart is an equally interesting process, which I have no space to describe in detail, and which taxes the accuracy of the surveyor to the full. The preliminary work, as may have been gathered from the above particulars, is executed on the officers' 'field-boards.' From thence, the soundings, &c., are transferred to a large sheet, kept in the chart-room; and from this plan, a fair sheet is ultimately drawn. The fair sheet is sent home to the Hydrographic Office in an air-tight tin case, and from it the Admiralty engravers produce the published charts, which are sold to the public at an absurdly small cost.

THE SACRED BEETLE.*

By LAMONT GREENE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

SOME years ago—a good many—I was putting up at Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo. This place is a veritable caravanserai of travellers. Men and women of all ranks, classes, and nationalities then frequented it, and I reckon they continue to do so to this day. The babel of tongues, the many various languages constantly striking on one's ear, would have been, perhaps, tiresome and wearying to most men; but to a hardened old rolling-stone of a bachelor like myself the admixture was profoundly interesting. Most of the languages spoken were familiar to me; and I derived great interest from studying the different representatives of nations who made Shepherd's Hotel a halting-place for a short or prolonged space of time, as the case might be.

One naturally gravitates in such a crowd towards one or two men who seem of a congenial spirit. Such a one I discovered in an American—a Colonel Merritt. Tall, well built, and a thorough gentleman, he attracted my attention almost immediately; a few casual words led to our monopolising a little marble-topped table to ourselves for after-dinner coffee and cigarettes; and our conse-

* The Right of Dramatisation reserved.

quent talk cemented a friendship which I hope to improve later on in the Colonel's own country. Every night we would sit out under the stars smoking and chatting; and at length, after some three weeks of acquaintanceship, the Colonel related the tale to me which I propose to lay before my readers. But as he told it in rather a disjointed fashion, beginning where the adventure concerned himself, then passing on to its termination, and finally winding up with what should have been the prologue, I have ventured to take upon myself to put it 'ship-shape,' or, as children always ask one to do, 'to begin at the beginning.'

It is needless to remark, after this preamble, that the story in itself is not my own: it is Colonel Merritt's. But the shaping and fashioning of it are mine, and therefore any faultiness in the construction and retelling thereof must be laid to my charge. It is a very strange experience for this nineteenth century—for the end of it—although Edison and others have so familiarised us with marvels that we should not pose as bigoted unbelievers in any tale, however astounding it may appear to our ordinary everyday senses. Rather should we exclaim with Hamlet that 'there are more things,' &c., and wonder, more especially when we remember that Egypt was the birthplace—at least I believe so—of very extraordinary things in the way of magic and science. Be that as it may, this story is one of the strangest I ever came across, and as such I deliver it over to my readers, promising only that it is perfectly true—according to the Colonel's word of honour—and that the reason it was not more universally known is that the actors therein were too ashamed of the parts they played, or were made to play, to say anything about it publicly.

These few remarks concluded, I will proceed with the tale of 'The Sacred Beetle.'

The clocks were chiming midnight from the various church towers of the ancient university town of Böllingen. After a few moments' pause, the bells of all the sacred edifices in the city broke out into a simultaneous clash and clang. It was the 31st of December 187—, and they were bidding adieu to the old year and welcoming in the new. The night was calm and clear, but bitterly cold; and the moon poured floods of silvered light over the snow-clad roofs and streets, rendering the latter as clear as day, and intensifying, by comparison, the shadows of the buildings and trees which stretched themselves in flat black patches over the whitened ground. The stars twinkled brightly in the frosty air, and the voices of those who were hardy and bold enough to venture out to the midnight services rang sharply and distinctly through the keen atmosphere.

Dr Carl von Eberstein sat alone in his study on the second floor of the house wherein he lodged, poring intently over an ancient-looking, yellow scrap of parchment scrawled over with numerous symbols and—seemingly—algebraical signs, while by his side and on the floor lay scattered a number of loose sheets of paper covered with calculations and writing. As the sound of the chiming bells struck on his ear, he raised his head as though to listen, and then, pushing his documents from him, he rose, and,

drawing aside the curtains, gazed out into the starlit night. He was a man of about thirty-five, tall and well built, with fair hair, beard and moustaches, a handsome, though slightly wearied-looking face, and clear blue eyes. A very favourable specimen of the German type, and good to look upon.

'Ay! ring on,' he muttered as the bells leaped and jangled in their delight that a new year was born—'ring on! Do ye triumph in that I have discovered some grand old mystery of science, perchance, or do ye mock at me and my endeavours? Nay; let me rather assume the former;' and flinging open the window, he leaned his elbows on the sill and allowed the pure air to play about his throbbing temples. The bells were silent now, and the little retired street in which he lived lay sunk in repose. Presently he heard cheerful accents approaching, and then a clear tenor broke out into a song, the words and tune of which were at once caught up by eight or ten other men's voices, and the refrain rang out melodiously on the night:

We love the Moon, the merry Moon,
We love the merry Moon;
We greet her smile in winter;
And we laugh with her in June;
The sun's broad face may bear the trace
Of mirthsome mood and jest,
But oh! the Moon, the merry Moon,
We love the Moon the best.

By this time the student choristers had arrived beneath the Doctor's open window, and, glancing up, espied him leaning out.

'Good-evening, Professor,' they shouted. 'Are you bidding a tender farewell to another departed year?'

'Ay, ay, my lads,' responded Dr Carl, 'although after a somewhat different fashion from yourselves.—But good-night—good-night; it's time for bed.'

'Schlafen sie wohl,' was the reply, and with this cheery wish and a unanimous 'Happy New Year to you!' the little party moved on homewards, breaking out again, as they went, into their song:

The little stars peep out, peep out,
The little stars peep out,
And shudder into shade again
To hear our merry shout;
So let them shrink and nod and blink,
And blush at joke and jest,
But oh! the Moon, the merry Moon,
We love the Moon the best.

The chorus died away gradually, fainter and fainter as it receded, into the distance; and the Professor leaned thoughtfully against the side of his open window, listening to the melody as it came floating back to him in scarcely audible harmonies. Then he carefully closed the sash, drew the curtains, and strolled over to the fireplace, where he stood chafing his hands before the welcome blaze.

'Happy youth!' he murmured. 'What do they care about the future? No serious reflections, no weighty problems, trouble their light hearts. How they would laugh did they but get an inkling of the work their sober Professor of Oriental Languages has been this night engaged in. Well—let me see the result of my labours again, and make certain that there is no

mistake. Who would have thought that I should have discovered this old manuscript while unrolling that mummy some days ago! And still less, who would have dreamed of the tremendous secret therein contained! And yet it is not all unravelled; the mystery is not yet clear; let me see again.' And taking the parchment and a sheet of paper with writing on it from his table, he drew a chair close to the fire and commenced comparing the two documents. After half an hour's careful study, he raised his head. 'Yes, the translation of the cipher seems correct. How does it sound?' And he read off in slow, distinct accents the following:

'Stranger, whosoever you may be into whose hands these words may fall, know that I was the Priest Amunophis of the holy temple of Osiris. Owing to my skill in and aptitude for the various sciences and magical mysteries of our craft, I was admitted by our high-priest to his sole intimacy. From him and with him I learned much mystical lore, but in so doing I lost health and character—the former owing to my excessive toil and zeal; and the latter to the unholy reputation of wizard, which clung to me. Shortly before his death, the high-priest summoned me to his private chamber, and there exhibited to me, in great secrecy, a small, perfectly-formed, bronze beetle—a "scarab." "This," said he, "you must enfold carefully in prepared linen, and deposit on my bosom when I am embalmed and laid in my tomb. Its virtues are so potent and so dangerous, that I have determined none shall possess it, and I am forbidden to destroy it, now that it is fashioned. Swear to perform my bidding." I swore; and at his death I fulfilled my oath. Being now myself about to die, I have enjoined that this scroll should be wrapped with me in my shroud; and if it be the will of the gods, the Sacred Beetle shall, through my means, emerge from its obscure resting-place and complete its destined task, though what powers may be attributed to it I know not. If, therefore, thou fearest not, proceed to Philæ, and seek along the river for the Temple of Abou-Symbal, which is dedicated to the worship of Osiris. In the innermost chamber are four figures, seated each on a throne. Under the feet of the second figure from the right as you behold them is situated the tomb of the high-priest Menhartis. It lies at the bottom of a deep pit, in a rock-hewn cavity wherein are three sarcophagi. The one in the farthest corner from the entrance is that of the high-priest. Remove the cover; unroll the mummy; and on its breast, folded in many wrappings, will be found the object of your search—the Sacred Beetle. Appropriate it, oh venture-some one! and test its powers, be they for good or ill; and blame not me, but thine own foolhardy inquisitiveness, should the result prove the latter. Farewell.'

The Professor ceased, and an expression of deep gravity overspread his features. 'Shall I take the matter in hand?' he soliloquised. 'If I do, I will carry the adventure through to the end be the issue what it may.—But pshaw! Am I to believe in talismans with magical properties in this nineteenth century? And yet!—Here he fell to musing again. Presently he rose, filled his pipe, fetched his Bradshaw and an atlas, and

began to map out the journey. His cogitations and his pipe were finished at the same moment. His face lightened. 'I can have a six months' holiday,' he exclaimed briskly, 'and I will take it. I will start at the earliest possible date, and I will get to the bottom of this affair; and if there be any elucidation of the mystery, I will fathom it. And now to bed.'

So saying, he carefully locked up his precious manuscript and its translation, and retired to his couch to dream, disturbed by visions of tombs, and Pharaohs, and magical scarabs, all of which played havoc with his bewildered brain.

HINTS FOR HOUSEKEEPERS.

It may not be generally known that tough meat can be made tender by laying it a few minutes in vinegar. Remember not to salt fresh meat when frying until it is nearly cooked, as salting makes the juice of the meat run out, and the meat is not so tender. The general rule for roasting is to allow fifteen minutes to a pound, provided the fire be good, and ten or twenty minutes over, according as the family like it well done or not. Perhaps few people think how much better a leg of mutton looks if boiled in a coarse muslin cloth or white netting.

Does every housewife recollect how to remove the strong flavour of poultry? The fowl should be washed in soda-water, rinsed in cold water, and wiped dry.

How many housekeepers are competent judges of fresh eggs or fish? In judging the former, you should notice that a fresh egg has a lime-like surface; stale eggs are glossy and smooth of shell. Firmness of the flesh and clearness of the eyes are the great criteria of any fish being fresh and good. Fresh fish also lie in a slightly curved position, and never quite straight. Herrings and cod are known by the redness of their gills and clearness of the eyes. It is worth recollecting that salt fish is best and quickest freshened by soaking in sour milk; and that all fried fish should be dried in sheets of paper in front of the fire.

Lobsters, crabs, and crayfish, when recently caught, always retain some remains of muscular action in the claws, which may be excited by pressing the eyes with the fingers. Shrimps are firm and crisp when fresh. If oysters are fresh, the shells are firmly closed. Speaking of shellfish, it may here be mentioned that the Consultation Committee of Fisheries in France came to the conclusion that the poisonous action of mussels is due to the presence of a particular microbe occurring only in mussels that have lived in stagnant waters. It is more assuring to learn that such mussels are deprived of their poisonous property by the addition of sodium carbonate to the water in which they are boiled—a simple precaution which might well be taken by every consumer of these fish.

Some people are not always careful to drain the water from vegetables as soon as they are cooked. Others do not know that potatoes should never be put on a table in a covered dish; they will re-absorb their own moisture and become sodden. Before attempting to chop parsley, wash it and squeeze it very dry in a clean cloth. It is also well to know that if you rub the hands on celery after using onions, the smell will disappear.

The medicinal properties of vegetables are not always appreciated. Celery is good for nervousness, rheumatism, and neuralgia. Lettuce is cooling and sleep-producing; and asparagus purifies the blood. Tomatoes act on the liver, while beets and turnips are excellent appetisers. Potatoes should be avoided by those inclined to be stout; but peas, broad-beans, and haricots are positively strengthening. Onions, garlic, leeks, olives, and shallots all possess medicinal virtues of a marked character; while onions eaten raw are recommended as a remedy for insomnia. Soup made of onions, being a tonic and nutritious, is regarded by the French as an excellent restorative for debility of the digestive organs.

Apples are also said to possess great medicinal value, especially for persons of sedentary habits. Apples and pears cut into quarters, stripped of the rind, baked with a little water and sugar, and eaten with boiled rice, are capital food for children. Another hint worth noting is to scald rhubarb before cooking it. It then takes much less sugar, and yet loses none of its acid. Orange-peel dried and grated makes a fine yellow powder that is delicious for flavouring cakes and puddings. It will also be found that apple and pear pips when bruised impart an excellent flavour to milk-puddings. Not a bad substitute for eggs in cooking is corn-starch. In short, it may be remarked that one of the great weaknesses of cooks in this country seems to be their contempt for economising in any way. They appear to fail to realise that it is better to begin life on Indian-meal pudding and salt cod-fish, and rise to roast beef and mince-pie, than to begin on roast beef and mince-pie, and get down to Indian-meal pudding and salt cod-fish.

It is advisable in cold weather that we should eat heartily of substantial food and drink milk and cocoa. Before boiling milk, rinse the saucepan out with cold water, to prevent burning. To keep milk sweet or to sweeten sour milk, put into it a pinch of carbonate of soda. Useful, too, is the knowledge that a pinch of salt added to a glass of milk renders it digestible to most persons; but salt should never be added to new milk when cooking, as it will cause it to curdle. Unfortunately, it must be admitted that the spread of infectious diseases through the agency of milk constitutes one of the dangers of the day. It has been noticed how the consumers of boiled milk, as a rule, escape any ill effects. In short, boiled milk may be said, for practical purposes, to secure immunity from infection by its means. The prudent housekeeper will therefore consume only boiled milk.

Not everybody knows how to preserve drawn beer. Cover over the vessel containing it with a saucer or plate. Place a couple of raisins, a little sugar, or a few grains of rice, into it. This generates the desired effervescence. Vinegar or yeast should never be kept in stone jars; the acids contained in them attack the glazing, and this is often poisonous.

Great improvement will be found in tea and coffee if they are kept in glass fruit-jars instead of tin boxes. The flavour of this favourite beverage is easily spoiled by the vicinity of any articles of pronounced odour, such as cheese, bacon, &c. How many people know how to make tea on scientific principles? Immediately that the water

boils it should be poured on the tea. Experience tells us that six minutes is best for the process of drawing, to bring out the proper quality, flavour, and strength. It is a mistake to neglect thoroughly heating the teapot before the tea is put in it.

If you rub the tea-kettle with kerosene and polish with a soft dry piece of cloth, it will appear as bright as new. Tea-stains may be removed by pouring boiling water through them. But never let boiling water touch japanned tea-trays, because it will cause the varnish to crack and peel off. Have a sponge, wet it with warm water and a little soap, rub with a cloth, and polish with a dust of flour and a wash-leather. If there are any marks, rub them with sweet-oil till they disappear.

Tea is recommended for washing grained wood. Stains on cups and saucers can be removed by scouring with powder, bath-brick, and soap. Save some tea-leaves for a few days to use for varnished paints; steep them in a tin pail for half an hour; strain through a sieve, and use the tea for cleaning the paint, which will look almost new. It will not wash unvarnished paint. A little ammonia in the water reduces the labour of cleaning soiled paint, while white and pale shades of paint may be beautifully cleaned by using whiting in the water.

If you wish to observe method in the house in winter, get your work forward by daylight, to prevent running about at night with candles. Thus you escape grease-spots and risks of fire. By the way, candles should be bought in winter. They are better when made at this season, and if stored in a cool dry place, will improve with age.

When house-cleaning, it is wise to begin at the cellar, and to give more thought to the condition of things in that region than to the drapery of the parlour windows or the ruffled pillow-shams in the 'spare room.' It may not be generally known that masons' dust from stone-sawing makes a perfect substance for scrubbing floors and plain deal tables, rendering them beautifully white. Tiled floors should be washed with lukewarm water and soap, dried with a soft cloth, and then rubbed over with a little linseed oil on an old silk handkerchief, and polished. Oil-cloths should never be washed with soap suds, but washed first in cold water, then rubbed dry with a wet cloth.

In cleaning carpets, go over them once a week with a broom dipped in hot water, to which a little turpentine has been added. If soot falls on the carpet, do not attempt to sweep it, or the result will be an ineradicable smear. Dry some salt thoroughly in the oven, sprinkle it over the soot, then sweep, and no trace of the soot will remain.

To clean paper hangings, first blow off the dust with the bellows. Divide a loaf a week old into eight parts. Take the crust in your hand, and, beginning at the top of the paper, wipe it downwards in the lightest manner possible with the crumb. Those disfiguring oily marks where people have rested their heads may be removed from the paper on walls by mixing pipeclay with water to the consistency of cream, laying it on the spot, and letting it remain till next day, when it may easily be removed with a brush. In choosing dusters for your house-cleaning, you will find cheese-cloths are the best, especially

after they have once been washed. A cloth wet in hot vinegar will remove paint from window glass; and diluted spirit of salts will get rid of window-stains; nor must it be forgotten in cleaning that a rich gloss can be put on glass by rubbing it quickly with soft old newspapers or tissue-paper. It may here be remarked that the kitchen window is the best of all windows for plants; the steam from boilers and kettles keeps the air moist. Finger-marks may be removed from varnished furniture by the use of a little sweet oil upon a soft cloth. Kerosene will remove spots from furniture; and stains on marble will disappear before the application of paste made of chloride of lime and water, if rubbed into the parts stained and left to remain for six hours. It should then be washed off with soap and water.

Metal will not prove so troublesome to keep in order if we only go the right way about cleaning it. For example, salt of lemon juice will remove iron rust. Fine emery paper and sweet oil are all that are necessary to keep steel bright; while a cloth saturated in kerosene and dipped in whiting will be found best for cleaning tinware. Strong ammonia should be poured over old brass to clean it, then thoroughly scrub with a scrubbing-brush, and presently the brass will shine like new metal. Stair rods should be cleaned with a soft woollen cloth dipped in water, and then in finely sifted coal-ashes. Then rub them with a dry flannel until they shine and every particle of ash has disappeared.

To at once heat rooms and save coal, buy a fire-brick about two inches thick. When the coals are aglow, lay this flat brick on the top of the fire, when it becomes red hot, and throws the heat out into the room in a way that a fire without this simple device will not do. Should your house be afflicted with chimneys that smoke, it should be borne in mind that the best preventive to the nuisance is to open the windows of the room ten minutes before the fire is lit, and not simultaneously with the lighting, as is generally done.

Those other nuisances—vermin in a house—may be got rid of in various ways. A hedgehog in the kitchen will soon exterminate black beetles. An india-rubber plant is said to drive flies from an apartment. Chloride of lime about the fireplace, or a little Scotch snuff, will cause crickets to cease to chirp. A few drops of essential oil of lavender on cotton-wool, quickly rids a bed of troublesome insects. Cayenne pepper sprinkled freely in the haunts of rats will make them leave the premises. Ants will not like powdered alum scattered on shelves, nor moths damp salt, if used in sweeping carpets. It is comforting to know that blankets and furs sprinkled with borax and done up air-tight, will keep free from moths.

When cleaning hair-brushes, use warm water and a little ammonia. When possible, dry in the hot sun. Take every opportunity of putting your sponges in sea-water, for nothing cleanses them as this does. When on the subject of sponges, we are reminded that satin may be cleaned by sponging lengthways—never across the width—with benzene, if greasy, or alcohol, or borax water. This will not be injured by direct contact with iron; press on the wrong side.

Stains of every description may be removed from silk, linen, or woollen stuffs. Mix a wine-

glassful of rectified spirits of turpentine with half a teaspoonful of essential oil of lemons, and preserve the mixture in a well-stopped bottle. Apply a little on the stain with a bit of silk. The colours of the fabric will sustain no injury from the application.

Don't despair of being able to restore scorched linen, but peel and slice two onions, and extract the juice by squeezing or pounding. Cut up half an ounce of white soap, and add two ounces of fuller's-earth; mix with them the onion juice and half a pint of vinegar. Boil the composition well, and spread it when cool over the scorched part of the linen, leaving it to dry thereon. Afterwards wash out the linen.

Kid-shoes may be kept soft by rubbing them over once a week with pure glycerine and castor oil; and the leather of shoes and boots can be softened if washed monthly in soft warm water and then oiled thoroughly. They may be rendered permanently waterproof by soaking them for several hours in thick soap-water. If you wish to have dry boots, observe the American plan of filling them, when taken off at night-time, with hot oats, the best grain for the purpose. They do not injure the leather, and preserve the shape of the boots.

The neglect of many of these seemingly little things such as are here hinted at, but which are so important to the well-being of a household, frequently may arise less from disinclination to take trouble, than from ignorance, or forgetfulness of the remedies to be employed.

THE HILL OF SEVEN TREES.

By REGINALD HORSLEY.

You know that long blue hill which one can see from Toogong on a clear day? I mean the one on the top of which grows an irregular circle of six tall iron-barks, with a dead one in the centre. 'Gum Tree Hill,' it is usually called for short; but the literal translation of the native name is 'The Hill of Seven Trees.' Well, that hill was the scene of an adventure, which, though it ended agreeably enough, yet began in a fashion which threatened a very different termination; and indeed, if it had not been for what Foster is fond of calling my phenomenal luck, and the fact that I have apparently as many lives as a cat, I should probably not be here to-day to tell the story.

I was out after a gang of desperadoes so ruffianly that their deeds threw all previous bush horrors into the shade. They were known from the name of their leader as 'The Flower Boys,' and as a gang their career had been remarkably successful, though, individually, of course they suffered from time to time. Eight of them still remained at large, and they kept the country side pretty lively, carrying out their plans in so clever a manner that it was almost impossible to trace them, much less run them to earth. What became of all the money and valuables they secured, or how they got rid of them, is hard to say. No doubt, many of the small settlers of the baser sort were in their pay, and vast sums must have been expended in keeping shut the mouths of these gentry. But we were certain that, notwithstanding this, a big pile

must be stowed away somewhere; and at mess, or round the camp fire, we often speculated as to who the lucky man would be to discover the hoard.

One blazing hot February the gang came down in force upon a pack of fools who had been lucky at Tambaroora, and, disdaining the services of the escort, started to take their dust down to Sydney on their own account. Things leak out at the diggings, and no doubt some of the 'Flower Boys' were on the prowl for news. At any rate, on the second night of their journey the 'lucky five,' as they were called, were bailed up, and making some resistance, were shot down and all their gold stolen. It was a few days before the matter came to light, and then, with four picked men, I set to work to scour the country for Flower and his gang, for it was pretty certain they were at the bottom of the outrage.

We had been out about a week, with never a hint of the men we were after, when one day, as we were riding rather aimlessly over a long flat, Foster, who was on the right, brought up his horse with a sudden jerk and sprang to the ground with a sharp exclamation.

'What is it, Tom?' I called out.

He stooped to pick up something, and then ran towards me. 'Look, sergeant,' he said excitedly. 'What do you make of this?'

'What?' I asked, leaning over my horse's neck as he came up. Foster held up a small nugget of pure gold.

'Nuggets don't grow on this kind of soil,' said he.

'No; and diggers don't come this way down to Sydney,' put in Longmore.

'What do you suppose it means, sergeant?' queried Foster.

I did not answer him, and the men fell to discussing the matter among themselves. Indeed, I had scarcely heard Foster's question, for the moment I saw the nugget in his hand an idea had taken strong hold of me, and I sat silently on my horse, working it out, with my eyes fixed upon the distant Hill of Seven Trees.

'Boys,' I said at last, rousing myself from my meditations, 'I've a notion this bit of gold means a good deal to us. There is nothing to stick up in this direction; so, if Flower and his gang have passed over this ground—and we will assume they have—there is every likelihood that the nugget has been dropped by one of them on the way to their lair, wherever that may be.'

'I wish I knew,' interrupted Peterson fervently.

'Well,' I went on, 'if we have decent luck, you will know before to-morrow morning.'

'How?' 'Why?' 'What do you mean?' cried the men.

'Look!' I answered, pointing to the hill, from the summit of which curled upwards a thin, very thin column of smoke, so faint as to be almost invisible in the shimmering distance.

'Bush-fire beginning,' said Longmore.

'It may be so,' I acquiesced; 'but remember, this is an out-of-the-way place, and that smoke may have another origin.'

'Flower is too good a bushman to light a fire where it could be seen,' argued Foster.

'Hope for the best,' I returned. 'At all events, it can do no harm to reconnoitre. We are much too far off to have been observed, so

we will dismount for the present, hobble the horses, and remain where we are till nightfall, when we will go forward and examine the hill.'

The afternoon wore on, and by five o'clock the column of smoke was no longer to be seen.

'What about a bush-fire now?' I asked.

'Well,' said Foster, 'probably it was a "sun-downer's" fire. Flower is a bigger fool than I take him to be if he lit it.'

As the sun sank behind the ranges, we jumped into our saddles again, and in a couple of hours reached the base of the hill, which, as you may know, juts out in a very peculiar fashion from the range of which it forms part, showing a bold, precipitous front to the east, and sloping away in a long ridge, or neck, to the hills behind it.

'It is useless to attempt to scale that, lads,' I said, looking up at the rugged face of the cliff that towered above us. 'We must work round and climb up the neck.—Vincent, you stay here by the horses, and keep your eyes open and your six-shooter handy. The rest of you come with me.' And with a parting word to him, we plunged into the darkness and made for the ridge on the right side of the hill. Once round the face of the cliff, the ascent was fairly easy over the stone-strewn ridges, and in no very long time we stood upon the summit of the spur, nearly half a mile from the front of the hill. Then I called a whispered halt, and gathered my men round me.

'Now, lads,' I said, 'we must search this hill thoroughly. Go slow, for we have plenty of time before us, and the work must be well done. Spread out in a long line, and examine every inch of the ground. If one of you should discover anything he thinks I ought to know, let him hoot thrice like the mopoke, and I'll join him. The same cry thrice repeated will be the signal for the rest to come up. If nothing comes of it all, we'll rendezvous at this point at sunrise. Be very careful. The moon will soon be up, and then you must take advantage of whatever cover you can find. Above all, don't hurry.—To your places.'

We started in an extended line, like skirmishers, Foster on the extreme left, Peterson next, then myself, while Longmore took up his position on the right.

For some time we worked on without result, and not a sound broke the stillness of the night. Then, suddenly, from the left came the mournful notes of the mopoke, thrice repeated.

'Confound it!' I thought. 'I wish the signal had come from the other side. One can never trust Tom Foster except in a fight.'

However, there was no help for it, and I turned and made my way in the direction of the sound, wondering what mare's-nest Foster had discovered, and grumbling generally, when all at once the ground seemed to glide from under me, and the next moment I felt myself falling, falling, falling, through what seemed in the pitchy darkness an infinity of space. Instantly the horrifying thought shot through my brain, 'I have gone over the edge of the cliff;' and then I plunged violently into a thick shrub, rolled out of it, and was off again, crashing through bushes and saplings, grasping wildly right and left, and clutching madly at whatever came in my way, till at length my headlong course was arrested by some hard

object, against which I came sideways with a fearful thump, which nearly knocked all the remaining breath out of my body. Then, as I felt myself slipping away again, I made a desperate effort to recover myself, and flung my arms round the opportune obstacle which had arrested my fall, while at the same moment a large piece of rock, dislodged by my struggles, went whirling into the air, struck a ledge immediately below, rebounded off, and thundered down the side of the steep, while I hung on to my friendly support with a tenacity born more of terror than of necessity. But there is some excuse for a man who has fallen I don't know how many feet through space, and then rolled I don't know how many more down a rough mountain side.

Presently, however, I began to collect my scattered senses, and then I saw that I was clinging to the trunk of a sassafras tree, which grew out and made a convenient angle, into which I had fallen, and but for which I should doubtless have gone the way of the rock. While my arms clung to the tree, my body lay stretched on a small projecting ledge, so that I soon realised that all danger was over for the time being, and, loosening my grip of the tree, felt myself all over, and stretched my legs to see if any bones were broken. No. I was badly bruised and shaken, but otherwise quite unhurt, and I took a fresh grip of the tree, intending to haul myself up into a more comfortable position, when in an instant I stiffened into immobility, and lay as still as a snake in the sand, my face buried in my arms, lest the sound of my breathing should betray me. And this was the reason. Immediately below me I heard rough voices conversing together in low tones, and evidently not more than a few feet away.

For a moment I lay and listened, as from beneath came up a muttered conversation.

'Wot d'yer reckon it wuz, Bill? Wallaby?'

'Wallaby be blowed!' answered Bill. 'It was a great junk of rock. I see it strike the ledge 'ere and go over. It just missed my head.'

'I wish it had been one of them troopers,' said a third voice with heartfelt emphasis.

A fourth voice added a word or two which I failed to catch, and then the first speaker exclaimed with a fierce oath: 'Well, it's all right, anyway. Whatever it was, hez gone to the bottom long ago. I'm going to turn in again.'

Then for a moment there was a shuffling of feet, and afterwards silence, profound and enduring.

I lay as quiet as a mouse, my eyes fixed upon a silver streak that touched a low bank of clouds somewhere in the sky. The moon was rising, and when once she was up, I should know better what to do.

Just then a spasm of dismay seized me. Foster, having given the signal, would naturally be waiting for me. What if, finding I did not join him, he should coo-ee! He was ass enough to do it; and if he did, good-bye to all chance of coming unawares upon my game below. It was scarcely likely my men had not noticed the noise I made in falling, but I could only hope the same idea had occurred to them as to the fellows underneath—namely, that a rock had been dislodged from its bed. I felt thankful I had not cried out as I fell. Profound stillness reigned, however, and I concluded that either Foster was showing

a most unusual discretion, or that he had fallen in with Longmore or Peterson, both of whom knew better than to give any indication of their whereabouts.

A quarter of an hour passed, and the silver fringe on the cloud-bank grew more intensely brilliant, and at last a magnificent full-orbed moon sailed majestically into the sky, shining with such radiance that one might have supposed it to be day. I gazed about me in astonishment. From the ledge on which I lay I could see that I had fallen down one side of a great chasm, a hundred feet wide, which apparently clove the Hill of Seven Trees in two.

Having taken a broad survey of my position, I began to examine the immediate vicinity. I found that I lay on a narrow out-jutting rock about six feet wide, down the sloping side of which I must inevitably have slid had I not grasped the tree in time. Immediately below me was a ledge about fourteen feet long, and on this, I at once concluded, had stood the men whose voices I had heard. But where were they now? That was the puzzle. Just then, I heard a curious sound, and craned my neck over the rock as far as I could. But its surface slanted so peculiarly that still I could see nothing but the ledge. Again the sound was repeated—this time an unmistakable snore.

'Ah, there they are,' I said to myself; 'sleeping the sleep of the just.' But where? On the ledge, under the shelter of my rock? Or—ah! I had it. The truth flashed upon me in a moment. There was a cave or hole in the side of the gully, and they were in it. How could I get down to the ledge? I leaned over still farther. Yes, it could be done. It was only a drop of six feet or so, the tree grew out over the ledge, and if I swung on to that, my feet would almost touch the rock.

At that moment, while my head still hung over the edge of the rock, there was a sudden movement beneath me, and a burly ruffian stepped on to the platform and stood in the clear moonlight looking about him. I am used to surprises, and I kept quiet, though my heart thumped so violently against my ribs that it seemed to me he could not fail to hear it. However, he stood still and made no sign. So close was he that I could have knocked off his cap by stretching out my arm. Had he looked up, he must have seen me; but he did not, and as I lay breathless, motionless, rigid as the rock upon which I was stretched, I heard him soliloquise: 'What's the use of keeping this confounded watch? There's nobody round. I'm going to turn in like the rest of 'em.'

All the time I was rapidly forming a plan of action, while one hand stole silently to my hip, where my second revolver reposed in its case. My first had gone goodness knows where when I left the top of the hill behind me. Presently I had the weapon out, and extending my arm far over the edge of the rock, I held it within a foot of the bushranger's head. He yawned and turned in his tracks to go back to the hole, and, turning, looked straight down the gleaming barrel. It was all over in an indescribably short space of time. Astounded at the unexpected sight, and anticipating nothing less than instant death, the man stepped backwards mechanically.

One foot went over the ledge, and then, throwing up his arms, he fell with a shrill shriek into the gloomy depths below.

I had not anticipated so sudden and terrible a result, but I had no time to take in the horror of it all. The situation was instinct with danger, and I braced myself to face it. So thrusting my revolver into my belt, I grasped the tree, swung myself silently down, and drawing again, stood prepared for whatever might follow. I stood on the platform about two feet from the mouth of a great hole in the mountain side, into which I could not see for a wall of rock which projected between me and it. But as I stood, a voice came from within in sleepy tones: 'What's up, Bill? Another rock?'

I did not answer, and the voice continued: 'Bill! I say, Bill!' Judging it unsafe to keep silence any longer, I answered in a gruff whisper: 'Wot?'

'Did yer call?'

'No; it was a curlew.' And fortunately the weird wailing scream of that bird rang out on the air as I spoke.

'That's all right, then,' growled the voice, and silence fell once more.

I allowed a minute or two to elapse, and then wormed my way round the rock and looked upon a strange scene.

In front of me was a vast hole, one of those natural excavations so common in the mountains, a place altogether about the size of an ordinary room, with a wide floor, and a roof sloping away to a narrow angle at the back. On the floor was a fire of logs, which had recently been replenished, and no doubt the smoke issuing from this hole, unobserved by the ruffians, had been that seen by us in the afternoon. Two men lay on the ground, sleeping heavily and snoring loudly; while a third sat warming his hands over the blaze, his back turned to the entrance, and evidently quite unsuspecting.

I made up my mind at once, and strode into the cave without any attempt at concealment, for I felt that I had the game in my hands now. The fellow heard me coming, of course. 'Hullo, Bill!' he grunted without looking round. 'Had enough watching? I told yer there was nothing up. Hev a sup of this and turn in.' And he stretched out his hand to a bottle, to which he had evidently been paying close attention. 'Take a sup afore yer lie down,' he reiterated; and then, as he turned his head and saw me: 'Why, what the?—Here—wake up, Ned! Wake up, Chicken!' he cried, and springing to his feet, he plucked his revolver from his belt.

'Throw up your hands!' I shouted, covering him.

For answer he rushed at me, firing as he came. His bullet grazed my cheek, and I felt a sharp stinging pain, as if a red-hot wire had been drawn across it. In another moment we should have been in grips, when I pulled the trigger. The ball took him squarely between the eyes, and he fell in a heap at my feet. Not a second elapsed before I had my pistol pointed at the others.

'Throw up your hands!' I cried. 'Throw 'em up!' I repeated savagely, as one fellow's hand stole to his belt. 'Up with 'em, or I fire.'

They dared not resist, for I had the drop on them, and they knew it.

'Now, throw your barkers on the ground and stand up.' They did so. 'Now your knives. Right. Kick them over here.' And at last they stood there, as hangdog a couple of ruffians as you would wish to see, but defenceless.

'We're done this time, Chicken,' said Ned with an oath.

'Yes,' I said, 'you are; so you'd best be quiet. Are there any more of you about?'

'No,' growled the Chicken.

'Where's Flower, then?' I asked.

'Where you won't find him,' said Ned.

'You keep a civil tongue in your head,' I retorted.—'Ned, you pick up that bit of rope and tie the Chicken's hands behind his back, and if you don't get it done before I count ten, I'll blow your ugly head off.—Quick, now!'

With a savage snarl Ned obeyed; and as he tied the last knot, I slipped a pair of handcuffs over his wrists before he had time to realise what I was about, whipped a turn of the rope around his waist; and then, as the two of them broke into a torrent of fearful curses, I searched the cave thoroughly without finding anything for my pains.

'Shut up!' I said, taking the slack end of the rope in my hand. 'Keep your breath till you get to Sydney. You'll want it all then. And now, march!'

'Where to?' growled the front fellow.

'Down the gully. You lead me to the face of the hill.—And mark me, if you attempt to play any tricks, you'll get a mighty short shrift. On you go.'

They started in sullen silence, and once on the ledge outside, walked to the left, where, hidden in the shadow of the great boulder, was a narrow track.

'There ain't no way down as I knows on,' said the Chicken looking back.

'Then lead up to the top,' I answered, 'and we'll get down by the neck.'

They went on, forcing their way through the shrubs and undergrowth, and clambering over rocks and fallen trees with a good deal of difficulty in their helpless condition, while I followed behind like a slave-driver, only with something much more convincing than a whip in my hand. Just as we got to the top of the gully there was a sudden loud coo-ee close by.

'Foster at last,' I thought. 'Coo-ee!' I shouted in return, and then, 'Hurry up, boys! I've got 'em.'

There was a cry of astonishment, and my men came running up together, all pressing round to shake me by the hand.

'Well, I'm blowed!' said Foster. 'How did you manage it? We had given you up for lost, as, after we struck the edge of the gully, we all agreed you must have fallen over.'

'Well, and so I did,' I answered cheerfully; 'and that's the way I managed it.' And I told them my story.

'By gum!' said Foster again when I had finished, 'if your luck isn't phenomenal!'

'But, Tom,' I interrupted, 'what made you give the signal?'

'I heard something,' he replied; 'but it was only a rock wallaby on the go.'

'Ah! I thought as much,' said I, laughing. 'Well, I forgive you any way, for unless you had hooted, I might never have had that lucky tumble into the gully.'

'But did you find anything?' asked Longmore. 'Nothing,' I answered. 'I expect the hoard is somewhere else, and Flower and the others are alongside it.—Isn't that so, Chicken?'

But the Chicken preserved a disdainful silence.

As we were talking, we were standing within the circle of trees which gives the hill its name, and Peterson was leaning against the dead tree, standing on one of its giant roots. As he was filling his pipe, he dropped his pouch, and uttered an exclamation of surprise as he stooped to pick it up.

'What's wrong?' we all inquired.

'Why, here's another of them,' he answered, and held up a small nugget between his finger and thumb.

'Aha!' I said; 'we are on a hot scent, boys. Search among the roots.'

They did so without any result, while to all interrogation the two prisoners remained obstinately silent.

'The tree is hollow,' said Longmore at last; 'but there is no opening at the base. Perhaps higher up'—

'By Jove! you've struck it, Jack,' I cried. 'I wondered all along what they wanted with all that rope. However, put the bracelets on the Chicken, and let us have the line here.'

Foster very soon accomplished this, and with the rope in my hand I turned to Peterson. 'You are the lightest, Frank. Take a cast over the first fork and shin up.'

After a few unsuccessful attempts, we got the rope over the branch, and a slip-knot having been made, the loop was drawn taut. Peterson then took off his boots and swarmed up the rope, occasionally resting his feet against the trunk, in the native fashion, and presently he was in the fork.

'Here you are, sergeant,' he cried. 'There's no mistake about it this time.'

He was tugging away at something with all his might, and at last, from a wide hole in the straight trunk above his head, he wrenched out what looked like a bundle of old rags.

'Stand from under!' he shouted, and cast the thing at our feet, swinging himself to the ground a moment later. It was an old flannel shirt, tightly rolled up, and with the sleeves knotted round it for security. I untied them, and as the ends fell apart, the moonbeams poured a flood of radiance upon a great heap of nuggets and gold-dust.

'Hurrah!' shouted my men; while Peterson exclaimed: 'That's good enough for one haul, I should think.'

'Rather,' I said. 'There must be about a hundred ounces here.—But this can't be all: the "lucky five" had more than that by a good deal.'

'It's all you'll get,' put in Ned, with an oath. 'The rest of the swag is where you will never touch it.'

'We'll not take your word for that, my man,' I replied. Nor did we; but, all the same, the most thorough search by daylight discovered nothing more; and at last we gave it up, and

jogged off with our prisoners, well content with the result of our expedition so far as it went.

Ned and the Chicken stood their trial, and went to their deaths without opening their lips about their fellows; and it was many a long day before we ran down Flower, though we got him at last.

THE ITALY OF AMERICA.

At Point Conception, a promontory two hundred miles south of San Francisco, the western coast of America suddenly abandons its southerly course, and turns eastward. After continuing a hundred miles in this new direction, it again turns and resumes its original trend. The two hundred and fifty miles of coast-line between Point Conception and San Diego, a town and harbour on the borders of Mexico, form an oblique angle, in front of which a number of small islands are dotted down, which give the waters of South California something of the character of an inland sea. At a distance from the coast varying from fifty to a hundred miles there runs a range—or rather a series of ranges—of mountains, forming part of the great Sierra Nevada system. The principal of these ranges is that named San Bernardino, in which the Grayback peak reaches an altitude of eleven thousand feet. At the back of the ranges lie the deserts of Colorado and Arizona. This district, thus sheltered and enclosed, has a climate of its own. 'Except a tidal wave from Japan,' says Mr Dudley Warner, 'nothing would seem to be able to affect or disturb it.' And in his charming book entitled *Our Italy* he lays before his countrymen its various characteristics and advantages.

As the Americans are famous for their knowledge of meteorology, it is interesting to learn the causes to which the peculiarities of this particular climate are attributed. The land, it appears, gradually shelves upwards from the coast to the mountains, and then drops abruptly for six thousand feet to the level of the Colorado desert. This latter, being treeless and without water, is very hot in the day and very cold in the night-time. At sunset, therefore, a column of hot air ascends from the plain, and being prevented from travelling eastwards by a similar column from the neighbouring Arizona desert, makes its way westward to the Pacific. Here it cools, and, by condensing, causes a vacuum. In this way a new current is engendered, which travels eastward from the ocean, sweeps up the rising ground to the mountains, and then plunges down into the plains below. These alternating winds are but rarely changed, and it is to their prevalence that the characteristic feature of the climate of Southern California, its equability, is due. So marked is this characteristic, that the average monthly means of temperature taken at San Diego over a period of sixteen years gives a range extending only from fifty-three degrees five minutes in January to sixty-nine degrees in August. A still more remarkable return is this: in a single year the average temperature at three in the afternoon for the months of July, August, September, and October only varied by a single minute; September showing an average of sixty-

nine degrees five minutes as against sixty-nine degrees six minutes in the remaining three months.

It is not surprising that Mr Warner in seeking to recommend this district to his fellow-countrymen should call it 'our Italy,' since the affection of Americans for 'the poet of the nations'—as Mrs Browning calls Italy—is so warm. 'It is a Mediterranean,' he says, 'without marshes and without malaria, with cooler summers and warmer winters. It is an Italy whose mountains and valleys give almost every variety of elevation and temperature.' He points out that in such places as Santa Barbara, on the coast, and Los Angeles, fifteen miles inland, both the natural beauty and the climate of the Bay of Naples and the Riviera may be enjoyed. In advising his countrymen to try South California as a wintering place, he gently quizzes the cultivated New Englander; it is comforting to find that in so doing he uses terms which Englishmen are in the habit of supposing to belong exclusively to their own much abused climate. 'A man from the Eastern States is,' he says, 'accustomed to extremes. Such a person when he goes for his holiday may expect too much. He wants a violent change. If he quits the snow, the slush, the leaden skies, the alternate sleet and cold rain of New England, he would like the tropical heat, the languor, the colour of Martinique. He will not find them here. He sees the orange ripening in its dark foliage, the long lines of the eucalyptus, the feathery pepper-tree, the magnolia, the English walnut, the black live-oak, the fan-palm in all the vigour of June; everywhere beds of flowers of every hue and of every country blazing in the bright sunlight—the heliotrope, the geranium, the rare hothouse roses overrunning the hedges of cypress, and the scarlet passion vine climbing the roof-tree of the cottages. It is a fraud,' he says, 'all this visible display of summer, and of an almost tropical summer at that: it is really a cold country. It is incongruous that he should be looking at a date palm in his overcoat, and he is puzzled that a thermometrical heat that should enervate him elsewhere stimulates him here.'

Of course, Southern California cannot rival Italy in associations. The only touch of romance this American Italy can claim is derived from its early Spanish occupants, and is preserved in the few Spanish buildings which remain and in the softness of its names—Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Bernardino, and the rest. The Spanish adventurers visited the country in the sixteenth century; one of them, Vasques de Coronado, gave his name to one group of the sheltering islands already mentioned. But the work of civilisation, the planting of vines and olives, was due to the missions which the Franciscan monks established among the Indians in 1769. The American did not arrive until 1840. Subsequently, as the possibilities of the place began to be known, a period of 'chance development'—as Mr Warner calls it—set in, a period in which the imagination was heated by the novelty of such varied and rapid productiveness. The 'frenzy' of 1886-87 was followed by the inevitable collapse; but in 1890 a movement of steady progress set in, and this is the condition of the country at the present time. The acreage of vines and oranges, of grain and corn, is rapidly

increasing. Nor are the towns behind the country districts. Parks and gardens are laid out, schools and colleges are founded, and first-rate hotels have been built.

But the South Californian coast is not only a Mediterranean of winter sunshine and blue waters, but a 'commercial' Mediterranean as well. All the fruits which Europe from time immemorial has gathered in the Mediterranean countries—raisins, walnuts, almonds, figs, oranges, lemons, and the rest of them—can be grown in this pleasant land. In respect of such supplies, America is to become independent of Europe.

In spite of this genuine progress there is still some 'tall talking.' This Mr Warner discovered when he was driven round Los Angeles. After the party had seen places that 'in their wealth of flowers and semi-tropical grandeur would rouse the enthusiasm of the most jaded traveller,' the driver was asked if there were any finer in the city. He replied: 'Finer—hundreds of them;' and then added meditatively and regretfully: 'I should not dare to show you the rest.'

The mountain scenery of Southern California is even more wonderful than its floral wealth. It includes the Yosemite Dome and Waterfalls, and the Grand Cañon of the Colorado. The Yosemite is familiar enough to the ordinary globe-trotter. The nature of the Grand Cañon is less known. In describing it Mr Warner says: 'We had expected a cañon; what we saw was not a cañon or a chasm or a gorge, but a vast area which is a break in a plateau.' The foreground of this space appeared to be filled by 'gigantic architectural constructions.' Amphitheatres, walls of masonry, fortresses, and temples of mountain size were some of the forms which these masses of rock presented to the eye. The whole was wonderfully coloured, blending in the sunlight into 'one transcendent suffusion of splendour.' The effect produced by this spectacle was different according as the nature of the spectator varied. In some cases, an awe-struck astonishment; in others, a sort of hysterical emotion, was produced. In his own case, Mr Warner experienced a confusion of vision which prevented him for some time from forming any mental estimate of what lay before his eyes. Such an effect is due in part to the suddenness with which the scene bursts upon the traveller.

THE MEADOW-GRASS.

THE grass is bending, quivering in the light
Of a hot July sun, and where the gray
And plummy flowerets of the ripening hay
Are thin as silken threads, up springs the white
Ox-eye, a butterfly in hovering flight.
But where the taller grasses are at play
With buttercups, that like a golden spray
Toss in their midst, the lean unhappy height
Of sorrel towers, a something burnt and red,
On which the feet of the quick lightning fell
When Heaven had thrown it from its thunder-bed.
Yet hark! The mower rings a sharpening knell
Upon his scythe—to-day we flower, we wed,
We learn—to-morrow we sleep well.

C. A. DAWSON.

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PLOVERS AND THEIR PECULIARITIES.

By H. A. BRYDEN.

IN these whirling days, few people find time to stop and consider the ways and habits of the many interesting creatures that surround them. A sprinkling of enthusiastic naturalists, the more thoughtful among sportsmen, and perchance one in a hundred of the tourists who throng river and mountain and loch during their brief vacations—these are the only folk who have eyes and ears for the thousand-and-one interesting traits even of the avi-fauna of their own land. And yet, as every true lover of nature knows, there is a world of pleasure to be got out of a little quiet observation even in the fields, or hedgerows, or moors within reach of our great cities. At the present moment, for instance, in the meadows between Hampstead and Hendon, within five miles of seething London, the Green Plover, the Kestrel, and other interesting birds are constantly accessible to the observant eye.

The Plovers, an interesting and widely distributed group of birds, have some peculiar habits which distinguish them from all their feathered fellows. And of these habits one of the best known and commonest is their trick of simulating lameness and displaying extraordinary antics in order to draw off the passer-by from the vicinity of their nests and young. The common Green Plover or Lapwing is an excellent exponent of these antics—none better, indeed, in the whole family. This handsome bird, the Peewit of the English, Pees-weep of the Scotch, Dix-huit of the French, enjoys an immense geographical distribution, and is to be found not only all over Europe, but also in North Africa, and in Asia as far even as far-off China. Besides its trick of diverting attention from its eggs and offspring, this plover has another singular habit, shared with other members of the plover family, a habit of teasing and crying at—almost of threatening—human beings. In the grim and dangerous days when the Covenanters met in conventicle upon the

desolate hill-sides and lonely mosses of their country, this plover is said to have not seldom guided by its presence the soldiery in search of these stubborn worshippers. And for this reason the Covenanters and their descendants long nourished a peculiar hatred of the bird. So late did this antipathy exist, that Sir Walter Scott in his time remembered the Lowland shepherds destroying the nest of the green plover whenever found.

Personally, I can sympathise to some extent with this ancient detestation, for the reason that, in the far interior of South Central Africa, I have met with a plover of equally annoying habit. Wandering along the banks of the Botletli River, in the Ngami country, in search of wild-fowl, I have been so pestered and annoyed by a species known as the Spur-winged Plover, that at last, in a rage, I have raised my gun and shot one or two of my tormentors. These birds seem to have a strange dislike for the human form. They have excessively sharp, ringing voices—from which they take their native name, 'Setula T'Sipi,' or 'iron hammer;' and especially if one carries a gun, they greet the hunter with the most noisy and incessant cries, scolding perpetually, and swooping and dashing in quite a combative manner often close to one's head. These scolding tactics are by no means peculiar to the nesting season. Naturally, they disturb the fowl of the vicinity, as seems to be their object, and the gunner, as I have said, sometimes driven to desperation, at last turns upon the feathered plagues and wastes a charge or two of shot upon them. This plover, sometimes called the 'Blacksmith Plover' from the metallic clink of its voice, is a handsome species, garbed wholly in black and white; the curious sharp spur upon the point or shoulder of each wing distinguishing it readily from all its family, and hence its other name of Spurwing. It is seldom found far from water.

There is another South African plover, the wreathed plover, or well-known 'Kiewitje' (the diminutive of 'Kiewit,' a name manifestly adopted, like our English 'peewit,' from the cry of the

bird) of the Dutch Boers, which shares in a lesser degree in the noisy habits of the Spurwing. This beautiful bird is found throughout the length and breadth of South and South Central Africa, and its shrill, mournful cry is one of the best remembered night-sounds of the wilderness. The spurwing is usually found in small flocks, seldom exceeding half-a-dozen members; the kiewitje often flies in bands of from twenty to forty, and the sight of a human being is pretty certain to call up a chorus of sharp cries from the noisy creatures. They do not, however, pursue the traveller with so inveterate a hatred as the spur-winged plover, and indeed are often to be found in constant attendance round the hut or farmhouse of the colonist. This habit is probably merely a selfish one, as the presence of flocks and herds and of grain increases the sources of food-supply. For this reason also the kiewitje is no doubt so frequently found in the neighbourhood of old cattle kraals. On the other hand, it is as often as not found in the heart of the desert, far remote from water. This plover, from its 'lapwing' flight, its chiding cry, and malingering habit (in nesting-time), much resembles its European congener, the green plover.

That cautious and suspicious bird, the Gray Plover, a scarce plover in Britain nowadays, is another well-known inhabitant of Southern Africa, where, however, its plumage is always of a much lighter hue than in Europe.

A plover of North America, the Killdeer, is another of the family which has a harsh and chiding voice. This plover is very abundant on the prairies, where it seems very well to represent the peewit of England and the kiewitje of South Africa, and upon the approach of human beings at once proceeds to lift up its voice in a querulous and impatient wail.

The Dotterel (so called because of its supposed stupidity), or Dotterel Plover, although once pretty common in Britain, is now but an occasional visitant. Of old, there was a curious legend—very generally accepted among country-folk—that this bird faithfully imitated the movements of the fowler, and so usually ended by becoming snared in the nets. So widely accepted was this idea, that Drayton in his *Polyolbion* has several lines descriptive of the dotterel's silly ways. And Bacon says of it: 'In catching of dotterels we see how the foolish bird playeth the ape in gestures.' The idea probably arose from the plover-like habit of feinting and tumbling in the air close to the fowler's head, in which way, possibly, an occasional bird ensnared itself.

The Ringed Plover or Ringed Dotterel, a well-known British shore bird of small but extremely handsome form and marking, is also noticeable for its clever use of stratagems to divert the passer-by from its nest; its sharp note of alarm and suspicion being characteristically plover-like.

One of the most useful members of the great family of plovers is Nordmann's Pratincole, a species belonging to the sub-family of Glareolinæ or Pratincoles. This bird, a great favourite among South African farmers, seems to exist solely for one object, that of destroying or helping to destroy the devastating swarms of locusts. It is well known in Cape Colony and the interior as the Small Locust-bird. When these birds appear, it is looked upon as a pretty sure sign of approach-

ing locust flights; and when the locusts pass over the country, darkening the air as they fly, devouring every eatable piece of vegetation as they descend, and bringing temporary ruin over immense tracts of ground, the locust-birds attend them literally in tens of thousands, killing and devouring their prey in incredible numbers. Their attack is always made upon a settled plan; and a vast ring of insects having been enclosed and devoured, the insatiable birds press on again for the main swarm, never ceasing in their attentions till night falls upon the scene. The digestive powers of these useful pratincoles are marvellously rapid, and their bills are particularly well adapted for their work. As the locust is captured, the wings are neatly severed, and fall to the ground; and it has been stated by a competent observer, that, in the case of a vigorous attack by these birds upon a large swarm, the 'passer-by sees a continual shower of locusts' wings falling to the ground.' These most excellent birds are seldom or never destroyed, and so well do they seem to understand their immunity, that they view the near approach of man with almost absolute indifference. Great as is the havoc wrought by locusts in South Africa, in varying cycles, their ravages would be immeasurably magnified but for the unwearying exertions of the feathered armies of the locust-bird. The upper colouring of these birds is ashy-brown with a greenish tint, the wing feathers are black; the throat is creamy white, the breast ashy. A gorget or collar separates the neck and breast. The stomach is snowy white; the legs, eyelids, and cere are red. In length, the bird averages a little under a foot. The tail and wings are sharply pointed.

Another singular South African plover is the tiny Treble-collared Plover, the Sea-cow Bird of interior hunters. This diminutive little creature—only about six inches long—is neatly arrayed in brown upon the upper parts, black and white underneath; upon the throat appearing the three distinctive collars, first of black, then of white, then of black again. Sea-cow, or in Boer Dutch, 'Zee-koe,' is the colonial name for the hippopotamus; and the treble-collared plover takes its colonial designation (Sea-cow Bird) from its frequent habit of attending the unwieldy Behemoth. Running about the back and head of that amphibian, picking off insects and other odds and ends, this little plover seems perfectly at home, while the sea-cow apparently accepts its offices in good part. This friendship between wild and often fierce quadrupeds and small birds is of common occurrence in Africa and other countries; the rhinoceros, the buffalo, and the Burchell's zebra, among others, all having their peculiar feathered attendants. The sea-cow bird—unless when actually in attendance upon its big friend—betrays none of the jealousy or restlessness at the sight of mankind so often noticeable in other members of the family; and I have had no trouble in approaching quite closely to the birds as they fed fearlessly in the shallows and upon the mud-flats of African 'vleis' and rivers. The Spur-winged Plover, before mentioned, is itself a well-known attendant upon the crocodile, entering its mouth, as it lies with its jaws wide open, and cleansing it of leeches and other parasites. It seems to be now well recognised that

the *Trochilos* of Herodotus—who first chronicled this friendship between bird and crocodile—was no other than the Spur-winged Plover.

Besides the gray plover, the Norfolk Plover or Thick-knee, the Kentish Plover, the Common Turnstone, and the Ringed Plover (previously mentioned)—all birds of Great Britain—are found in Southern Africa. The well-known Golden Plover of England has been also cited by Dr Hartlaub as a denizen of South Africa. Its occurrence seems, however, to have been exceedingly rare, and, personally, I have never set eyes upon a specimen between the Cape and the Lake Ngami country. This bird, by-the-bye, takes its scientific name—*Charadrius Pluvialis*, the 'rainy plover'—from its wild, restless habits just before the approach of heavy rains and storms. There seems little doubt upon this point. The very name plover is derived from the old French word *pluvier*—modern French *pluvier*—which manifestly had something to do with a rainy origin. Whether, because some members of the family were supposed to foretell, by their disturbed, restless cries and habits, the approach of storms, it is hard at this distance of time to say. Curiously enough, the German name for Plover is *Regen-pfeifer* ('rain-whistler'); so that the rainy connection of the bird would seem to be of wide geographical distribution.

As I have endeavoured to show, many of the plovers have habits which distinguish them from other feathered races. In Britain, unfortunately, year by year sees the gradual decline of the rarer species, in common with other ancient and notable birds of these islands. In the golden plover, we have, however, still a very numerous representative; while the peewit, despite the enormous consumption of its eggs, seems likely long to survive the assaults of the nest-hunters.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXIV.—GEORGE BY LAND AND SEA.

As the world wags, it was very excusable in Mrs Suffield to think a good deal more of her niece as the possessor of three or four thousand a year than as the schoolmistress earning a hundred and fifty. It was mainly on account of her urgency, therefore, that Isabel agreed that she and her father should spend their holiday at the same place as the Suffields; but it was wholly due to Isabel's own obstinacy that she resolved to take lodgings apart from her uncle and aunt: she believed that it would be better for her father not to see so much of his sister as would be necessary if he were her guest; and, moreover, he would be lost without his faithful henchman Alexander, and so Alexander must go with them. The next day, therefore, saw Isabel and her father thus established in a quiet house in Douglas in the Isle of Man, two doors from another quiet house in which dwelt the Suffields.

It was Mrs Suffield who had chosen Douglas for their holiday sojourn; and she had chosen it for two reasons—apart from the fact that the Isle of Man is the Paradise of Lancashire folk:

Lord Clitheroe was going to cruise in his yacht in the Irish Sea with Douglas for a centre or base; and her son George—who was so busy that he could not take a stretch of holiday—could easily manage to rush over to Douglas at each 'week-end.' The thought that Isabel and her son would thus, probably, be thrown a good deal together was now rather an incitement than a deterrent to her action. It cannot be said that she had formed any express plans to compass their marriage; she merely had the firm and honest conviction that Isabel was now a very fit match for her son, and that, on the whole, it would be a pity if Uncle Harry's money went out of the family.

George arrived in Douglas at the first week-end with unexpected magnificence. He also, like Lord Clitheroe, came in his yacht—which, he told his father, he had bought a bargain—but, as became a young cotton-lord, his yacht was propelled by steam, while the young aristocrat's was moved in the ancient way. The whole company—save Mr Raynor and his henchman—was assembled on the pier to receive him; and as soon as he stepped ashore he entered into a friendly argument with Lord Clitheroe regarding the speed of their respective vessels.

'Isn't she a beauty?' said he, regarding with admiration the rakish lines of his craft.

'Ye-es,' drawled Clitheroe. 'But I prefer a sailer to a steamer.'

'For speed?' said George—'for comfort?—or what?'

'For everything,' answered Clitheroe carelessly.

'Well, now,' said George, 'we've crossed from Liverpool in less than three hours with the tide against us too!'

'Ah,' said Clitheroe, 'have you? I crossed once in the *Sea-mew* there in two hours forty-three minutes from anchorage to anchorage with a good breeze on the quarter.'

'Oh,' said George, looking for a moment as if he had a mind to be incredulous. Then, repenting of that, he said: 'That's the *Sea-mew* lying out there—is it? She's a pretty thing. I tell you what, Clitheroe,' added he suddenly, 'if the weather holds, we'll both take a trip round the island to-morrow and see which gets back here first.'

'Good,' said Clitheroe; 'I'm game.'

And so they walked off the pier, Mr Suffield leading the way with his hand on his son's shoulder, and Lord Clitheroe following with Euphemia.

'Your cousin,' said Clitheroe to Euphemia, 'is a remarkably clever girl.'

'Isn't she!' said Phemy proudly. 'And she's a dear girl too!'

'I know a dearer,' murmured Clitheroe.

'Oh no, you don't,' said Phemy with a pretty pout. 'You only say that because you think I like it.'

'Now,' said Clitheroe, shaking his head down at her, 'that's not fair. You know I never say anything to you but what I mean and believe. But your cousin looks very handsome and distinguished: she's exceptional in that way, and with the fortune she has now, she should make a great match.'

'What,' asked Phemy with a meaning look, 'would you call a great match?'

'Dukes,' said he, 'are not common. But the Duke of Bilberry is single.'

'Is he not,' said she, 'very old?'

'No,' answered he; 'he is somewhere between fifty and sixty. But dukes, like politicians, take long to mature. For instance, I am over thirty, but I am regarded as a mere boy in politics.'

'So,' said she impudently, 'I daresay you are. But a duke won't do for Bell: she expects a prince.'

'A prince—does she? I don't think there are any princes in the market; no; no—what is the word?—quotations in princes. Besides, a German prince is not nearly so much worth while as an English duke.'

'I didn't say a German prince: I mean a fairy prince, you goose. Bell is not so easily pleased as me.'

And in spite of her bad grammar, Clitheroe smiled down on her with an indulgent tenderness.

Meanwhile, Suffield was marching along with his hand trustfully and affectionately on his son's shoulder, when a hideous foreigner, floridly dressed, saluted George with a profound bow.

'Who's that, lad?' asked his father. 'He is as ill-looking a scoundrel as I ever set eyes on.'

'You should not judge a tree by its bark, dad,' said George. 'That is Gorgonio, a Levantine or a Persian or Assyrian, or something of that sort; but he is a capital broker—knows all the turns of the cotton game.'

'Hast done business with him?'

'A little,' answered George.

'Hast dropped the firm's old brokers, then?' asked his father, with some concern. 'I don't like leaving old friends, lad.'

'No,' said George; 'I've not dropped them; but I don't give them all the business. They sent me some very bad cotton, and then didn't like my objecting to it.'

And thus they went on to their lodgings, leaving Lord Clitheroe at his hotel on the way. But before they left the Parade, George asked Isabel and the others if they would excuse him if he let them go on without him: he had caught sight of a man with whom he would like to have a word. So he left them, and hung behind to intercept Mr Gorgonio if he returned—as he expected he would—along the Parade. Presently Mr Gorgonio came and again saluted him.

'I guessed from your smile,' said George, 'that you had something to tell me. Am I right?'

'Quite right, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio in a thick, somewhat cavernous or sepulchral voice. 'I had news this morning, and I intended to wire you on Monday when I go back to business in Liverpool. It is splendid news, which I have got from a gentleman in Savannah which I trust very much indeed. But come into my hotel, which is here, and I will show you his letter.'

'Is it about prices, or quantity?' asked George.

'What, Mr Suffiel, do you think?' said Gorgonio. 'Quantity, Mr Suffiel!—quantity! But will not quantity touch prices? I think so!'

When they sat down in a quiet corner of the coffee-room of the hotel, Gorgonio produced from his pocket-book an American letter, which he handed to George. The gist of it was that, contrary to general expectation, the cotton crop would prove to be not an average but a very

poor one, and that, therefore, those who meant to buy should buy at once before the fact was widely spread. There were reasons given and figures, which looked important and tangled, and which accordingly George took pretty much on trust. The announcement impressed him. In silence he handed back the letter, and in silence—but with a sharp eye—Gorgonio received it.

'I suppose,' said George at length, 'your correspondent knows what he is talking about?'

'Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio, 'there is no man which knows better. The price to-day for September delivery was,' whispered he, leaning over the table and tapping on it with his nail, 'only 5½d.! Ah! what a beautiful, what a splendid corner I could make!—more better than Morris Ranger's!—if I had but a little bit of money!' He glanced keenly at George, whose eyes were fitting thoughtfully about the opposite wall. 'But no! I have not the money!'

'Will you wire to your office to-morrow morning,' said George with resolution, 'to buy as many Septembers as possible at 5½d.?'

'Wire?' exclaimed Gorgonio. 'Never! Never! In half an hour!—in ten minutes!—after the wire has been delivered at my office, every one knows it, and every one runs on the Flags to buy Septembers, and the price goes up! Never!—never wire! We will wait till Monday, Mr Suffiel. I do not think it will be any difference. Maybe—and Mr Gorgonio very knowingly put his finger to his nose—'the price will be lower than five-a-half.'

'On Monday, then, first thing,' said George, rising and giving his hand to Gorgonio. 'And I will come along to you after I have docked my yacht.'

'On Monday then, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio.—'His yacht!' murmured he, looking after George. 'Never mind, Gorgonio. Some day you also will have a yacht.'

George hurried off to his parents' lodgings, and, when all went out to enjoy the cool of the day after dinner, he and Isabel chanced to walk together. Isabel had felt that George looked coldly on her, and now she gathered the reason. She spoke first of the small legacy which Uncle Harry had left to Daniel Trichinopoly, his 'faithful black servant,' and that led her to speak of something else.

'By the way,' said she, 'Mr Ainsworth wrote to you—did he not?—a little while ago about a curious kind of adventure he had with Daniel in a strange place. What have you done about it?—anything?'

'I acknowledged the receipt of Mr Ainsworth's communication,' answered George.

'That all?' said Isabel. 'Did you not think there was anything worth taking notice of in the story he told you? I thought there was.'

'You knew it, then?'

'I knew it. Mr Ainsworth told me when he came back from the place; I had asked him to bring my father from there. Did you really read his letter?'

'Yes,' said George, with a manifest blush; 'I ran through it. It seemed to me he was just setting down the ravings of a maniac. Most absurd. Perhaps it was Daniel, perhaps it wasn't; though of course Daniel was in London at the time: he had gone up to travel with

Uncle Harry. In any case, I suppose the talk of a man in an opium sleep is not worth attention. A man has visions, and he tries to describe them : that's all.'

'George,' said Isabel very seriously, 'what is the matter with you? You used to like Alan Ainsworth, and to admire him and his work. Now you don't; and when he writes what he means to be a friendly letter, you throw it in the fire—no; it is summer-time: you tear it up into little pieces and throw it into your waste-paper basket.'

'I did not tear it up at once,' said George, rather sulkily. 'But I didn't ask for his letter: it was meddlesome in him to write it.'

'George,' repeated Isabel, 'you don't like Alan. Why?'

'I don't like him!' said George. 'Above all, I don't like your calling him "Alan".'

'Don't shout, George!' said Isabel.

'And I don't like,' continued he, evidently feeling that he had broached the subject and caught its full flow—'I don't like his being about with you and your father so much. You may not perceive it, but in the sly way those literary fellows know how to work, he has been making love to you! It's not fair, Bell!'

'Don't be absurd, George,' said Isabel, now very serious indeed. 'Mr Ainsworth has been a very good friend to me in London. He has helped me with my father in a way I can never be grateful enough for. He is alone in London, and I asked him to come and see me and my father—I asked him!—and we have talked and been friendly. And that is all. Really,' added she, after a moment's silence and reflection, 'I don't know why I humble myself to give you this long explanation.'

'You know well enough why you do it, Bell,' said George; 'because you know that, if I have spoken as I have done, and said disagreeable things about Ainsworth, it is only because I love you, and nobody but you!'

'Hush!' said Isabel. 'Lord Clitheroe and Phemy are behind us. And I believe they are laughing at us: they seem so tickled with something.'

On the next day—which was Saturday—the race took place between the rival yachts. It was not a public event. The vessels stole away together—the *Swiftsure* and the *Sea-mew*—and turned, the one to the north and the other to the south, without any persons but those on board being aware of their purpose. Lord Clitheroe was skipper of his own craft; while George, who had not yet acquired a certificate of navigation, had to have a sailing-master. A breeze from the west was blowing, and George determined to use what sail they could as well as steam.

'But is that quite fair?' asked Isabel.

'We did not bargain to use steam only,' answered George. 'Clitheroe knows we can carry sail, and he must know, therefore, we would not be such fools as not to do all we can to win.'

'Quite so,' said his father.—'Oh yes, Isabel; I think George is right. If Clitheroe did not expect it, it would be different.'

So George was now hauling on a sheet, now examining the log-line to see how many knots they were making, and now shovelling coal out

of the bunkers handy for the stoker to throw into the furnace.

Only over luncheon did George rest. He was in good spirits, and inclined to be light-minded about Isabel's fortune. He asked her what she was going to do with it; and she answered that she had several plans for getting rid of her large yearly income, but none was quite matured: she was more reserved with George on these matters than she had been with Ainsworth: she thought herself it was strange that she was not at all tempted to take George into her confidence.

'You should put your money into the business, Bell,' said George (and he seemed to mean it). 'I could give you fifteen or twenty per cent. for it, and then you would have at least ten thousand a year, instead of three or four.'

'But,' said she, looking somewhat surprised and alarmed, 'I don't want ten thousand a year; I find the responsibility of three or four quite enough.'

'No, no, George,' said Mr Suffield. 'Let Bell's brass alone. We won't put it in the business. Harry had it very well and safely invested, and we'll let well alone; besides, Bell can't for so long reinvest anything without the consent of her executor and trustee, and I'm that person.—Just pass me the claret, lad.'

The two yachts passed and hailed each other off the ancient town and castle of Peel.

'Oh, doesn't she,' exclaimed Isabel, looking after the *Sea-mew*, 'look lovely and living—like a great sea-bird with her white wings spread!'

'She sails well,' said George, 'and she has a good wind: she'll take a great deal of beating,' and he turned away to shovel more coal into the furnace.

That night, the race being won by George by some fifteen minutes—when George steamed into Douglas harbour the white wings of the *Sea-mew* were just visible off Laxey—the whole company dined in the rooms of the Suffields; and afterwards Mr Suffield observed to his wife: 'I think I must wake up our George: he is not nearly so attentive to Isabel as he ought to be in all reason.'

'Don't meddle and spoil, my dear,' said his wife. 'You are a dear good man; but between a lad and a lass you don't see any farther than the end of the nose on your face. You had much better leave George alone.'

IN OUR CHURCHYARDS.

In the green grassy Churchyards of our old parish churches in rural districts, there are several objects of interest over and above the monuments to the memory of the dead. In some of these sacred spots are venerable preaching-crosses, and crumbling old stone seats for the accommodation of those who listened to the preachers; in others, lichgates and lich campaniles; in a few more, isolated towers for the bells; in others, wells, curious stiles, sun-dials; and, in some parts of the kingdom, contrivances for the funeral or dead-light, or the tall round towers our French neighbours call the 'lanterns of the dead'; and, here and there, solitary specimens of man's work in curious forms not to be placed in either of these

categories. There is, probably, no churchyard in which examples of all these relics are to be found grouped together; but there is a very large number in which one or more of them may be noted.

It is thought every churchyard in old times had a cross in it of more or less sculptural beauty. And as several ancient churches in the southern counties have external seats built against them, with evident reference to the situation of these crosses, we may assume services were occasionally performed at them, or sermons preached from them, and these stone benches were intended to be occupied by the listeners. There are seats, for instance, against the south walls of both Glastonbury Church and Spraxton Church, in Somerset; and the crosses in both churchyards are towards the south-east side of both edifices; and at Bicknoller, in the same county, the seat is on the eastern side of the church, and the cross faces it. But these seats are not always part of the fabric. In Drayton churchyard there are circular stone seats round two fine yew-trees, that may have been used for this purpose. The crosses are generally raised on a base composed of a few wide steps; and ripe with their years and centuries of sunshine and storms, are extremely interesting and suggestive in their appearance. Herefordshire and Gloucestershire are especially rich in these relics. They are, however, to be seen occasionally in other counties. Here is Welford Church, in Berkshire, very ripe and hoary as to its round tower—on which an octagonal spire was superimposed when it was about five hundred years old, three centuries ago—and very impressive generally, and especially in the matter of the delicate and rich tracery in the windows; and on the south side of it we may see, towering over the pale tombstones, a tall cross. There are no great wide steps to this example; but, as a rule, we may conclude the preacher stood upon the tiers of masonry forming the base, with his audience surrounding him. We know the sermons were marvels of oratory, and occupied two and three hours in the delivery in Tudor as well as Stuart times; and we may assure ourselves the listeners weighed every word as it was borne to them through the summer sunshine. There is a tall cross nearly perfect, raised on four circular steps, in Stoughton churchyard, in Leicestershire. In Lincolnshire, there are two good examples, at Bradley and Tattershall. In the churchyard at Lanivet, in Cornwall, are two crosses, one of which is eleven feet high and the other a foot higher.

The lichgate (that is, corpse-gate, from Saxon *lic*, a dead body) is another feature of much interest. This is more frequent in Devonshire and Wales than in other parts of the kingdom, though most counties have some examples. In Scotland there are also a few still remaining, more or less dilapidated. The lichgate is a covered stone gateway of dimensions that admit of mourners resting under the shelter of the roof before carrying the dead to their last resting-place. Sometimes the roof is placed with the gable over the entrance; and sometimes with the slanting side in that position, and the gables at the ends; and some lichgates are furnished

with gates that revolve on a pivot, though more frequently with those that open and shut in the ordinary manner. The most complete examples possess a lichpath, lichseats, a lichstone on which to rest the mourners' burden, and a lichcross. Both stone and cross are frequently found in Cornish churchyards. In the pathetically simple old Welsh churchyards, full of slate memorials lying flat over the graves with fringes of the 'spears of the grass' round them, the lichgate with its moss-grown roof, worn-away seats, and narrow pathway, is an especially picturesque object. There is one leading into the churchyard at Gyffylliog, in Denbighshire, with the slant side of its sloping slate roof facing the road in a bower of chestnut trees. It is built of stone, and has a step down into the churchyard at the inner side of it. There is another in a deserted little church on the sea-margin, near Pensarn, in Merionethshire, turned gable-ways to the approach to it across the grassy marshes, with a wind-bleached wooden door to it like that of a country cottage. A third, at Llanbedr, close by, less affected by 'the sweet reproof of storms,' is more inviting, with only a light wicket in it to impede the view of the venerable little church in its setting of graves and monuments. Besides these corpse-gates, as they are sometimes called, there are, chiefly in Norfolk, lich campaniles, or low-walled erections in which bells are hung almost close to the ground, as in the churchyard at Southborough. They are often roofed with thatch. Occasionally, too, the real lichgate is furnished with a bell turret. In some parishes this gate is called a lichstile, and in others a churchstile, which has been corrupted to churstele.

In some churchyards, standing at the distance of several feet from the church are isolated towers for the church bells, high and of a majestic stateliness, or made of almost unhewn timbers in a simple framework. They may be after-thoughts; or a wave of rivalry in the matter of bells and bell-ringing may have passed over the land, and the structures to which these towers are appendages may have been considered not sufficiently strong to sustain the strain of great weights in movement; but there they stand with mysterious reticence and with most impressive outline, with their bells 'calling, calling.' One example built of timber, at Brookland, in Kent, is placed about six feet to the north of the nave, and rises in three stages, pyramidically, looking over the 'brave bleak land' serenely. Those in Herefordshire and Norfolk are of more magnificence. They are not to be confused with the six detached towers in Cornwall built on hills, to indicate the situation of the churches to which they belong in the valleys below. The example in Ledbury churchyard is a very fine one, of a stately sturdiness and comeliness. Others in the same county are more primitive in their outlines, and stand in the deep grass, among the rounded graves, with interesting simplicity.

Passing on to the 'lanterns of the dead,' it may be mentioned there are a few examples in France that help to throw a broad light on this subject. In the districts where cromlechs and other Celtic remains abound, there are, in a few churchyards, tall narrow straight towers, of much smaller dimensions than those intended for bells, being about five times the height of a man, more or

less, which have openings at their summits through which a light, drawn up by a cord over a pulley, would throw gleams around. These lantern-towers or hollow pillars, like the preaching-crosses, are placed on platforms composed of stone steps; and they are likewise furnished with a slight projection of a shelf-like make that has evidently been more than a convenient resting-place for the lamp whilst being trimmed. In one perfect example, there is an extra step in front of it, as though it was intended to serve as a small altar. The little opening, through which the lamp or light was passed into the interior, is at a sufficient height from the ground to enable any one in charge of it to get at it easily. The top of the lantern is generally finished with a cross. The presence of these relics in the regions rich with Celtic remains seems to associate their origin with some custom of great antiquity, though those remaining do not appear to be of earlier workmanship than that of the twelfth century. We may have remains of others in this country that have been mutilated or altered beyond recognition. In one of the French examples to which allusion has been made, the platform consists of four tiers of round steps, whilst the tower is of a square plan with the angles recessed; another is a round tower on a square base; and a third is a square tower on a square base. It has been suggested that they may have been intended to hold wax tapers, to give additional solemnity to funeral ceremonies; but the fact that the openings at their summits direct the rays of light to a distance, rather than to the ground immediately around them, does not give countenance to this view. They occur chiefly in churchyards adjoining the great lines of communication, or in very frequented places; consequently, it is likely they were intended to light up the land of graves, and divest it of some of its terrors, for the sake of those passing by; as well as to maintain an impression of care and regard for those who were buried in it.

Wells in churchyards are now extremely rare, though, on account of water having always been a requisite for church purposes, many sacred edifices must have been supplied with it by their means. They were sunk in the first instance, probably for the convenience of the builders, and then improved and made permanent. The cloisters of our large monasteries were thus supplied with water. And, on the Continent, wells are sometimes also met with in crypts. St Andrew's Well, near the east end of Wells Cathedral, is a fine spring of more than usual abundance, and, after overflowing, falls into the grand old moat, and becomes one of the distinguishing characteristics of the ancient city.

Sun-dials are most frequently found placed over the entrance-way of porches, though, occasionally, the mutilated shaft of a cross has been made into one in a more central position of the churchyard. There are a few examples of Saxon antiquity, some that the yellow-haired, blue-eyed Angles placed where we see them now, but the bulk of them belong to times when dialling had reached a more advanced stage.

Church stiles, with their steps up from the ground, their barrier to be stepped over at the top of them, often a stone slab fixed on end, and their steps down again on the other side into the

churchyard, are more common. They do not always take this form, being also often scarcely more than bars in some places of various ingenious contrivance. Whittingham churchyard, on the Alne, may be mentioned as a representative specimen. It has two of these stone stiles, one at the eastern angle and the other at the western, as though an old-time footpath running through the ground was thus protected. The river winds through the village, which is pleasant with trees, fountains, and a peel-tower. There are at both ends of the churchyard, placed at gaps in the wall, a few high narrow steps; and in the gaps stone slabs are fixed, edgewise; and the steep steps are so arranged as to afford good footing whilst crossing these stones, and to form a second set of steps by which to descend to the level of the pathway on the other side. The church has a Saxon tower and Saxon angle-stones at the west end of the nave; and it had a Norman arcade of four arches, only taken down within remembrance. It has much more work still standing of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; and these stiles are still the means, in these Victorian days, by which the honest country-folk enter the sacred precincts that were reared so long ago, and have been so much to so many generations.

In Ryton churchyard is a prehistoric work. This is a large tumulus of, apparently, ancient British origin. Among other miscellaneous objects to be seen in some instances, and scarcely noticed, are fragments of ancient fountains, which, when removed to make room for new ones, have been left lying among the gravestones in the churchyard. A stone altar slab that has been discarded has also been detected by a diligent observer. As in most other matters, the more knowledge we bring to bear upon the subject, the more we find in it.

THE SACRED BEETLE.

CHAPTER II.

On the following day, Dr Carl von Eberstein rose from his couch more firmly fixed than ever in his purpose, despite the alarming dreams which had so harassed him during the past night. He determined, as a preliminary measure, to confide his precious secret, and his resolution to fathom it, to his bosom friend and co-Professor, Herr Emilius Werther, who was also an Oriental scholar, and had dabbled considerably in Egyptology. As he proceeded with his toilet, he revolved in his mind the various arguments he intended bringing to bear on the subject, for Herr Werther was of rather a stubborn and obstinate nature, and would be very sure to combat fiercely—and probably with a strong seasoning of ridicule—the idea of the authenticity of such a document in the nineteenth century; and would most likely declare the whole thing to be a hoax, perpetrated by some of the mischievous and laughter-loving students of the university. These reflections, however, did not cause Von Eberstein to waver in his purpose, although the mere cogitation thereon caused him many a secret twinge. Summoning up his courage, he armed himself with his document, the translation thereof, and an enormous umbrella, and sallied forth to call on his friend.

On his arrival, and on his announcing that he had come on a matter of serious import, to which he wished his friend to give his undivided attention, Herr Werther at once ordered two large 'schoppen' of beer, placed the jar of canaster on the table, filled his pipe, took a preliminary swig at his jug, and bade Von Eberstein proceed.

As the latter unfolded his whole discovery, from the finding of the manuscript in the mummy to his deciphering thereof, the Professor became gradually excited; and when Von Eberstein announced his unalterable determination to go in search of the spot described in the document, and his intention to fathom its meaning, and find out what there was to be found, the Professor waxed enthusiastic, and, dashing his smoking-cap on the ground, vowed that he also would partake in this adventure. But on Von Eberstein's pointing out that both of them could not be spared at once, and that the right of discovery rested with him, the Professor gradually, though rather sulkily, calmed down, and acquiesced in the reasonableness of the argument.

For some hours the two sat talking, now calmly, now excitedly, over the find; but they both agreed on the one point, which was, that Von Eberstein should at once apply for leave, and start at the earliest possible moment; and that the whole matter should remain a secret locked up in their own breasts. The Professor also stipulated that at intervals his colleague should forward him news of himself and his progress towards his goal. Then they separated; the one to obtain his leave from the authorities; the latter to puzzle over a copy which he had taken of the precious manuscript.

That night the Professor received a brief note: 'DEAR WERTHER—I have succeeded in getting my leave, and am off to-morrow morning. Come over and see me to-night.—Yours, v. E.'

The Professor obeyed the summons; and the two sat smoking and talking until well into the small-hours, when they parted with a hearty shake of the hand, and 'Good-luck to you, Carl!' from the elder man.

What were Von Eberstein's thoughts as he sat alone in his room gazing round at his packed portmanteaus? What visions of treasures to be found, of secrets to be unravelled, of— He lost himself in wild and visionary imaginings! But eventually common-sense regained its sway. Nature asserted herself, and he went to bed to sleep soundly and dreamlessly. The next morning he was *en route* for Egypt, the land of the Sacred Ibis, the Nile, and the Pharaohs.

Some weeks later, Von Eberstein found himself one of a rather mixed party who were assembled in a 'dahabieh' on their way to Philæ and the First Cataract. There was an American young lady of about twenty-three, travelling by herself, after that delightfully independent fashion our cousins across the water love. There was a very solid clergyman and his wife, who had 'done' the Holy Land, and were now enjoying a little pagan relaxation among the Pharaohs. A young English swell—no need to describe *him*; two elderly maiden sisters of a certain age; a hideously ugly English 'nouveau riche'; and our hero. A nice square little party of eight. As yet, the only ones who had quarrelled were the clergyman

and his wife, the latter having roundly taxed her spouse with 'flirting and making eyes at that disreputable American girl who travels by herself!' Alas, poor priest! I'm afraid there was a 'soupçon' of truth in the accusation, else why did you blush so furiously and look so extremely awkward. Miss Emerson is only laughing at you. This lively young lady, by the way, had tried her charms and wiles on our young Professor, and was secretly much annoyed at his insensibility. He had other and more serious things to think of than the colour of a lady's eyes, or the tints in her golden-brown hair.

The river-craft sped on with a fair wind, and within the time appointed by the Rais, the party arrived at Philæ. Here they broke up and separated, each on his or her own particular quest, to hunt for curios, or to daub sketches of the scenery and ruins. The Professor, however, had laid his plans. He spoke the language, and therefore found no difficulty in obtaining an interview with the most potent of head-men in the vicinity. A judicious bribe ensured him the best men the latter could procure; and that night the little party, armed with cords, spades, axes, and all requisites for their purpose, set out for the temple of Abou-Symbal. The Professor led the way, and, fixing on the spot indicated in the document, bade his workmen dig. A very few minutes sufficed to lay bare a large slab of stone. This was rapidly removed, and lo! before them yawned the black mouth of a chasm of unknown depth. A few burning tufts of dry grass and some crackers were thrown down to dissipate any poisonous gases there might be, and then a lantern was lowered: the depth proved to be about forty feet. Rapidly a rough but strong windlass-like apparatus was rigged up, and a native descended. On his calling out that all was well, two others followed him, and the Professor came last, the sheik—who had suspected some new find, possibly of value, and had therefore come with the others—remaining behind. The Professor drew this individual aside, and said: 'Should there be any treasure here, it is yours: I want none of it. I have come to examine a mummy which I believe to be that of a king. Therefore, watch your men. My own people know that I have come here to open the place, and will be here shortly themselves, so beware of any foul-play.'

The sheik protested he was honest—as indeed he proved to be—and Professor Carl von Eberstein was lowered into the pit, his heart beating furiously at the thought that he was at last within arm's-length of his desired goal. Arrived at the bottom, where he found the labourers awaiting him, he glanced round. There were three sarcophagi. Promptly selecting the farthest from the entrance, as specified in the manuscript, he set the men to work, and very shortly they had loosened the lid of the sarcophagus. A few minutes' more labour, and it was lifted clean off and slipped to the ground.

'Lift out the mummy!' ordered Von Eberstein.

They obeyed.

'And now hold the light for me to see.' The lantern was held on high, and the Professor proceeded rapidly and with a skilled hand to remove the wrappings in which the mummy was swathed.

His obvious excitement was noted by the natives, who exchanged glances and a few low, muttered words. As the Professor neared the end of his task, he felt a hard knob under his fingers on the breast of the embalmed corpse. A few more turns, and he held it in his grasp. With hands trembling with emotion, he unrolled the tiny packet, and there, in his open palm, lay a small, perfectly-formed bronze beetle—the sacred scarab of the Egyptians. With uncontrollable emotion, he replaced it in its wrappings, deposited it carefully in a breast-pocket, and then turned to ascend to upper earth once more. But now the natives, who had been whispering to each other, and who evidently imagined that he had discovered some rare jewel—for they had not seen what it was that he had gazed at in his hand so rapturously—slipped between him and the rope.

'The effendi must show us what he has there before he leaves this place: it is the custom of the country.'

'I shall do no such thing. Stand aside!'

'Then we must use force.'

'You must, you rascals?' and he whipped out a revolver, which he held to the head of the nearest man, who dropped on his knees, thoroughly cowed and imploring pardon. 'Back, back, to the farthest end of the tomb, or I shoot!'

Disheartened and terrified, the three rascals obeyed.

'Ho! sheik!' he called.

'Sir?' came the answer, as a dusky face obscured the opening.

'Haul up. Quickly now!' And, still waving his revolver towards the affrighted and cowering group, our hero emerged into open air. 'I have seen what I want to; behold! this scarab is all I have taken as the token of remembrance of a great king. Now, if you will send one man with me, I will depart, and you can do as you will down there; I have only opened one sarcophagus.—And hark ye, sheik! Those men down there are rascals. And also listen: I have permission to open this tomb, but you have none. Therefore, you should be quick in what you do.'

The sheik promptly told off a guide for Von Eberstein, and then disappeared down the pit, while our hero strode away on his return journey. To him it seemed as though he trod on air. The night-breeze was pure and clear; a distant prowling jackal gave forth its dismal cry; but in his then state of mind it sounded to him like music. His thoughts went wandering back to the old high-priest whose body he had so summarily desecrated, and whose treasure he had so unceremoniously possessed himself of. He wondered what its attributes and powers might be, and how he should discover and unravel them. Vague dreams of the genii of old, and their talismans, flitted through his brain. The ancient manuscript had not lied. After thousands of years of silence, the dead had given up its secret to him, and had pointed the way. He had followed its directions, and they had led him without fault or pause to the exact spot where he was told the treasure—the sacred beetle—lay; and there had he found it, on the breast of the dead man. The weirdness of this uncanny and precise revelation, which had been laid bare before

his eyes after so many fleeting generations had come and gone, struck him with a strange idea: was it really the nineteenth century, and was he himself really Professor Carl von Eberstein? Or had he gone back to the old ages?

The sound of his Arab guide humming a tune assured him of the actuality of the present, and he strode along, still wondering and puzzling his brains as to the potentialities of his prize, until the masts of the 'dahabieh' rising in the distance, and standing out clear-cut against the faint light of the false dawn which tinged the sky, brought him to himself. His guide paused and pointed. With a few words of thanks, and the yet more welcome gift of several silver coins, he stepped lightly aboard; while the Arab ran back like a deer to his comrades, in order not to lose his share of the spoil. Our hero moved softly into his cabin so as not to awake the sleepers; and, throwing off his clothes, but placing his prize, securely fastened in its wrappings, in a tiny metal box, he fell asleep, clutching his precious find to his breast.

MENDELSSOHN IN SCOTLAND.

MENDELSSOHN made his first visit to England in April 1829. Towards the end of the season he put in execution a long-cherished scheme of making a tour in Scotland. He was then only twenty years old, and his letters home at that period are full of the freshness and buoyancy of youth, more indicative of the schoolboy than the man; in happy contrast to his later life, when oppressed by care and overwork. The Waverley novels, there can be little doubt, were the chief cause of Mendelssohn's visit to Scotland. The series had just been completed, and he had read them all. It may easily be imagined that they exerted a powerful influence on a cultured mind like his, and made him desirous of seeing for himself scenes of mountain and flood, such as he had only hitherto read of. He wished also to meet the great Wizard of the North face to face; 'chiefly to escape a scolding from you, dear mother, if I return without having seen the Hon,' he wrote. It is more, however, to Mendelssohn's friend, Carl Klingemann, who was then Secretary to the Hanoverian Embassy in London, that we owe what we know of this excursion; but at the best our knowledge only consists of disjointed and fragmentary incidents related in letters to the family at Berlin.

Mendelssohn and Klingemann, teeming with boyish spirits, set off from London by stagecoach on their travels—both cannot enough express their admiration for this peculiarly English institution, then in its palmiest days—and arrived at the gray Metropolis of the North one Sunday towards the end of July. The very first thing they did, which certainly proved their boyish energy, was to climb Arthur's Seat. After describing the prospect from the top in glowing terms, Mendelssohn adds: 'Why need I describe it? When God himself takes to panorama-painting, it turns out strangely beautiful. Few of my

Switzerland reminiscences can compare to this; everything here looks so stern and robust, half enveloped in haze or smoke or fog.' Farther on, he says in reference to Edinburgh: 'It is beautiful here! In the evening, a cool breeze is wafted from the sea, and then all objects appear clearly and sharply defined against the gray sky.' He had a bathe while in Edinburgh, but does not name the spot; all he says about it is that his swim in the deep Scotch ocean was pleasant, and that it tasted very briny. The last evening was spent in a visit to Holyrood Palace, 'where Queen Mary lived and loved. The chapel close to it is now roofless, grass and ivy grow there, and at that broken altar Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland. Everything around is broken and mouldering, and the bright sky shines in. I believe I found to-day in that old chapel the beginning of my Scotch symphony.'

If Mendelssohn was charmed with Edinburgh, he was no less charmed with its people, for he quotes of them: 'How kind the people are in Edinburgh, and how generous is the good God! The Scotch ladies also deserve notice; and if Mahmud follows father's advice and turns Christian, I shall in his place become a Turk and settle in this neighbourhood.'

The Highland tour was planned from Edinburgh. It was to be via Stirling, Perth, Dunkeld, to Blair-Athole; then by foot over the hills to Inveraray, to Glencoe, the isle of Staffa, and the isle of Islay, where they were to stay several days; then they were to proceed up the Clyde to Glasgow, then to Ben Lomond, Loch Earn, Ben Voirlach, Loch Katrine, and home by Cumberland. But the best-laid schemes do not always succeed, and neither did this; at least the original plan was not carried out, for they were unable to accomplish all they had proposed.

Mendelssohn had hoped to meet Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh, but being disappointed, he resolved to seek the lion in his den. He and his friend accordingly drove all the way to Abbotsford; and Klingemann gives a most absurd account of their encounter with the great man. But to it Mendelssohn adds: 'This is all Klingemann's invention. We found Sir Walter in the act of leaving Abbotsford, stared at him like fools, drove eighty miles and lost a day for the sake of at best one half-hour of superficial conversation. Melrose compensated us but little; we were out of humour with great men, with ourselves, with the world, with everything. It was a bad day.' Mendelssohn, as may be seen, was in a bad temper.

We find them next, under date August 3d, at Blair-Athole, where it was a 'most dismal, melancholy, rainy day.' The day before had, by way of variety, been lovely. In the morning they drove in an open carriage, and then walked twenty-one miles. 'We passed from rock to rock, many waterfalls, beautiful valleys, with rivers; dark woods, and heath with the red

heather in blossom.' Mendelssohn sketched, and Klingemann hit upon the divine plan of making rhymes at every spot where he made a sketch. On the evening of the 3d, they reached Bridge of Tummel, but the weather was still bad. 'A wild affair! The storm howls, rushes, and whistles; doors are banging and window shutters are bursting open. Whether the watery noise is from the rain or from the foaming stream, there's no telling, as both rage together.' They had put up at a typical Highland inn. Their room was large and empty, the wet trickled down the walls, and the floor was so thin that they could hear the occupants of the room below singing drunken songs and laughing. This was all very melancholy; and it is questionable if they found much consolation in hearing 'the little boys with their kilts and bare knees and gay coloured bonnets, the waiter in his tartan, old people with pig-tails, talk helter-skelter in their unintelligible Gaelic.'

Next morning they left Bridge of Tummel, but took the bad weather with them. Klingemann describes the journey in somewhat uncomplimentary language. Up hill and down hill, finding it easier to walk than sit in their 'cart'—what kind of vehicle Klingemann meant is not very clear, possibly he meant a dogcart—even although they had to stalk through moors and heather and all kinds of 'passes.' Here Klingemann indulges in a weak-minded joke: 'Nature here is so amply provided with them [passes], that Government does not ask for any.' They saw smoky huts stuck on cliffs, women looking through the window-holes, and now and then herds of cattle, with their attendant Rob Roys, blocking the way. At last, to their relief and delight, they reached civilisation—Fort-William, where they encountered the very newest piece of culture, a steamboat; and they found themselves among many people, enjoying the sea and the sunshine, good cheer, and society.

They proceeded by sea from Fort-William to Tobermory, where, after their wanderings, they found rest for their weary feet. By contrast, it seemed a charming place. Klingemann says that from his earliest days he had confounded the Hebrides with the Hesperides; and if they did not find the oranges on the trees, they found them in the whisky-toddy. It may be noted, by the way, that both had by this time acquired a taste for the national beverage.

On the morning of the 8th, Mendelssohn and Klingemann, along with many others, embarked on the wide Atlantic in order to visit Staffa and Iona. Shortly after starting, the barometer sank and the wind rose, and the 'ship-household kept its breakfast almost to itself.' Like troops under a withering fire, the passengers fell rapidly; and the sea, which is no respecter of persons, laid low the great Mendelssohn himself: he was most unpoetically and desperately sea-sick. As Klingemann remarks, he was on better terms with the sea as a musician than as an individual with a stomach. On reaching Staffa they put out in small boats to see the famous cave. 'A greener

roar of waves surely never rushed into a stranger cavern—its many pillars making it look like the inside of an immense organ, black and resounding, and absolutely without purpose, and quite alone, the wide gray sea within and without.' This is Klingemann's comment. There is, unfortunately, no record of what Mendelssohn felt on the occasion; perhaps he was too sea-sick to feel anything beside.

They next landed at Iona. Its ruins, its loneliness, its desolation, its graves of ancient Scottish kings, and still more ancient pirate-princes, impressed them perhaps more than Staffa did, for it was not the desolation of nature alone, but the desolation of departed man as well. Staffa and Iona seem to have been the culminating point of Mendelssohn's admiration for the Hebrides. Indeed, he says that they affected him in an extraordinary fashion. The impressions conveyed to his mind resulted in the famous 'The Hebrides' overture, which was completed the following year at Berlin. It is said that after his return home his sisters asked him to tell them something about the Hebrides. 'It cannot be told, only played,' he said, and forthwith seated himself at the piano and played the theme which afterwards grew into the overture.

As the travellers turned their faces towards Tobermory again, Mendelssohn's sea-sickness gradually left him, and he was able to bid defiance to the sea-monsters of the Atlantic, and even to maintain that the 'wet' was rain, and not mist, as Klingemann insisted. They reached Tobermory at seven o'clock in the evening, although they ought to have been at Oban by that time. The captain cast anchor in some corner or other, and they elected to pass the night in the cabin. There were no beds, and they had to make the best they could of the floors. 'Herrings are lodged in spacious halls compared to us,' says Klingemann, and they often chanced to make unknown boots their pillows. 'It was a wild night's revel, without the merry cup, and with rain and wind for the boisterous songsters.' They landed next morning, Sunday, at Oban, still in the rain; and not being desirous of hearing a Gaelic sermon, which, together with the weather, might have been too much for them, they drove on to Inveraray. During the drive, the sun came out and warmed their hearts, and helped them to a more cheerful frame of mind. At Inveraray they found an excellent inn and good quarters; and the smiles of the host's beautiful daughter, with fried fresh herrings and coffee for breakfast, put them at peace with all mankind.

A longing for letters now drove them to Glasgow; they travelled alternately by road and steamboat, via Loch Eck, to the mouth of the Clyde, which mode of progress excited their admiration, as it prevented the journey from getting monotonous. They sailed up the Clyde to Glasgow. This part of the journey also pleased them, firstly, and perhaps mainly, because there were scarcely any waves; from this it may be inferred that the waves of the wild Atlantic had been altogether too much for Mendelssohn; he, like a good many more or less notable people, found more pleasure in looking at them than being on them. The scenery, too, as they sailed up the river struck a sympathetic chord. The

pretty watering-places, the soft corn-fields, and a view of the clear wide distance, greeted them like old friends, after long roaming among the silent mountains.

The 10th of August found Mendelssohn and Klingemann in Glasgow; and although they did not exactly see and conquer, like Caesar, they saw and admired—very likely through rose-coloured spectacles, for they rested in luxurious idleness in the best hotel in the city. The remembrance of past disasters and bad weather faded away; but it was surely ill-natured on Klingemann's part to say that the Highlands brew nothing but whisky and bad weather.

On the 11th they made their last excursion, to Loch Lomond and the 'rest of the scenery which ought to be published and packed up as supplements to Sir Walter Scott's complete works;' but there is no record of Mendelssohn's impressions in these parts. On Loch Lomond they met with an adventure which might have cut short the days of the musician. Klingemann and he were out on the loch in a rowing-boat in the twilight, when, without the least warning, a squall swooped down on them from the mountains. The boat began to toss about in an alarming fashion, and Mendelssohn prepared to swim for it; but, as he says, with their usual good luck they got safely through. They had to spend the evening in the company of three or four noisy young Englishmen; and ultimately they had to make their way to their bedroom, which was in the next house, with cloaks and umbrellas. The next day they started on their southward journey, passing through Glasgow on their way to Wales.

Mendelssohn's experiences and impressions of the Highlands may be summed up in his own words: 'This, then, is the end of our Highland journey. We have been happy together, have led a merry life, and roved about the country as gaily as if the storm and rain had not existed, but they did exist. We had weather to make the trees and rocks crash. To describe the wretchedness and the comfortless, inhospitable solitude of the country, time and space do not allow; we wandered ten days without meeting a single traveller; what are marked on the map as towns, or at least villages, are a few sheds, huddled together, with one hole for door, window, and chimney, for the entrance and exit of men, beasts, light, and smoke, in which to all questions you get a dry "No," in which brandy is the only beverage known, without church, without street, without gardens, the rooms pitch-dark in broad daylight, children and fowls lying in the same straw, many huts without roofs, many unfinished, with crumbling walls, many ruins of burnt houses; and even these inhabited spots are but sparingly scattered over the country. Now and then you find beautiful parks, but deserted; and broad lakes, but without boats; the roads a solitude. Fancy in all that the rich glowing sunshine, which paints the heath in a thousand divinely warm colours, and then the clouds chasing hither and thither! It is no wonder that the Highlands have been called melancholy. But two fellows have wandered merrily about them, laughed at every opportunity, rhymed and sketched together, growled at one another and at the world when they happened to be vexed

or did not find anything to eat, devoured everything eatable when they did find it, and slept twelve hours every night: these two were we, who will not forget it as long as we live.'

THE POLICEMAN'S STORY.

I AM a Sergeant of Police. Thomas Summers is my name, and fifty-four my official number in the Marlshire County Constabulary. When I joined the Force I was a big, awkward-looking, country Johnny, as strong as a horse, and twice as healthy. Drill soon set me up, and the uniform set me off, so that when I returned to my native village on leave after three years' town duty, the folks hardly knew me. I was as well and as strong as ever, but a lot better-looking—at least so my old mother told me, and of course the hay-seed was pretty well combed out of my hair.

When I went back to Darbury, the town where I was stationed, they changed my beat. Up to then I had always been told off, not for what you'd call exactly low parts of the town, but for streets of little houses, rented by clerks and the better sort of working-men. Very easy beats they were, mostly, though not profitable in the matter of tips; but I was that innocent in those days I hardly thought of tips; and when a chap once gave me sixpence for helping him in at the window when his wife was away, and he'd forgotten the latchkey, I was almost ashamed to take it. The nights were quiet; burglars had more sense than to try it on in houses where they'd have had to take the parlour clock, the canary, all the chimney ornaments, and the master's greatcoat to make up the worth of a five-pound note; and in the daytime, except for boys throwing stones, there wasn't much doing.

When they put me up among the big houses near the Park, it was different. There were gardens to watch, if it was only for tramps sleeping in the outhouses; families away at the seaside leaving me half-a-crown to keep a particular eye on the premises till they came home; pedlars, beggars, and suspicious characters about all day. A chap couldn't go to sleep and do his duty by that beat, I can tell you.

There were compensations, though, and not only in the way of tips. There was more company; servants in all the houses, and parties up to all hours, especially in the winter. Even a cabman, who's out of temper because his fare has been persuaded to stop just half an hour longer, is better than nobody at all to talk to on a cold night, when you're about tired, and wishing the relief would come round, though you know he's not due for a good two hours.

As for the servants, I soon got to know most of them, and a very nice, pleasant, friendly lot of girls they were; but for long enough I never liked one better than another. At last, however,

there came a girl to Mr Town-councillor John'son's, and she—— But as my story is about her, I may as well begin it with the time I first met her.

She came out through the Councillor's front gate with a dog, a fox-terrier puppy about six inches long, and he began barking and worrying round my boots in a way very creditable to such a young one.

'Excuse me, miss,' I said, just by way of introducing myself; 'that dog's not muzzled.'

'Oh! he won't really bite you, sir,' she replied, laughing.

'Perhaps not,' said I, looking as stern as I could; 'but it's my duty to take him to the station;' and I made a grab at the little beggar as if I really meant it.

'Oh!' she cried, 'surely you wouldn't be so cruel?'

I had been running my eye over her all the time, not exactly professionally, of course; but a police officer, if he knows his duty, gets into the way of reckoning people up pretty quick, and I saw the joke had gone far enough.

'Well, not this time, miss, I won't,' I replied, 'seeing that you're fresh from the country, and perhaps didn't know there was a muzzling order in force here.'

'My!' she exclaimed. 'However did you know I was from the country?' It was written all over her as plain as could be, but it wouldn't have been professional to tell her so.

'What we don't know, isn't worth learning, miss,' I replied, trying to look as wise as a detective in a play. 'Next time you bring that young gentleman out for an airing, put his certificate of birth in your pocket. The order don't apply to dogs under six months old.—Good-morning.'

'Good-morning, sir,' says she, smiling, and dropping a bit of an old-fashioned curtsy, that put me in mind of the girls in our village school; and without another word we parted. We had walked together perhaps fifty yards. I kept straight on, following my beat, and she went round the corner to where there was a pillar-box to post a letter she'd held in her hand all the time. I suppose I fell in love with her there and then, because I kept thinking about her all day, and felt uncommonly glad my mate on the beat was a married man. She was a pretty girl, seemingly about twenty, medium height, fair hair and complexion, dark-blue eyes, pleasant features, figure inclined to plumpness, and was dressed—— But, as this isn't a description of a party who's wanted, how she was dressed doesn't matter.

I saw her nearly every day after that; he's a poor policeman who can't time himself to come round to a particular house when a girl's shaking her mats or doing something that will bring her in sight of the road; but I never managed to exchange more than a smile with her for more than a week. At last, one evening when I was off duty, I met her as she was going down the town.

'It's a nice evening, miss,' I said as she passed me.

She gave a little scream, looked round as if wondering which way to run, and then stared

at me with a please-don't-hurt-me look in her eyes, which died away as she recognised me through my plain clothes.

'Oh! Mr Policeman,' she said, 'I didn't know you at first, and you gave me quite a turn.'

'I'm sorry, Miss—what shall I have the pleasure of calling you?' I asked, thinking it was about time I knew her name.

'Wybrow,' she replied. 'I'm Mary Wybrow. And you?'

'Tom Summers, at your service, Miss Wybrow,' I responded, laying one hand on my heart, and bowing while I lifted my hat with the other. 'And how do you like Darbury?'

'Very well, Mr Summers,' said she. 'That is, what I've seen of it. The people seem kind and good-hearted.'

I wasn't vain enough to take this last remark altogether to myself; but as I was one of the people, it was encouraging. 'It's very good of you to say so,' I said; and then we walked on quietly for a bit.

'I hope I'm not taking you out of your way, Mr Summers?' she remarked just as the silence was getting awkward.

'Your way is mine, if you'll allow it, Miss Wybrow,' I replied.

She didn't say anything, but blushed and looked down, which I took to mean yes, and walked on by her side accordingly.

I need not set down what we said on that walk, or on plenty of others that followed it. She let me keep company with her; and the longer I kept it, the more certain I felt we were just suited to each other; but when I'd made up my mind to ask her plainly what she thought about it, something happened. I was passing Johnson's gate, going dead slow as usual, on the chance of a sight of Mary, when one of her fellow-servants came tearing out in a big hurry and ran smack into me.

'Here, young woman,' I said, catching hold of her arm, 'consider yourself in custody for furious driving.'

'You're wanted in the house,' she replied, having no time to laugh, seemingly. 'There's some things stolen.'

I didn't say anything. When a man's called in on a duty of that sort, the less he says and the more he hears, the better.

'Lots of things,' she ran on. 'The young ladies' jewellery, and I don't know what else.'

We got to the door before she'd time to give me any more particulars; and in the dining-room I found Councillor and Mrs Johnson, their three daughters, my Mary, and the other housemaid—the one who fetched me in was the cook—all looking very solemn.

'Summers,' said the Councillor, who was a bluff and hearty but quick-tempered man, 'members of my family have missed property for some time. My servants have offered to have their boxes searched, and I thought it best to have it done in your presence. I do not accuse or even suspect anybody, you understand.'

'Quite so, sir,' I replied; and we all went up-stairs.

Mrs Johnson and her eldest daughter turned out the boxes, first the cook's, and then the upper housemaid's, and then my Mary's. There was nothing found that shouldn't have been there

till they came to Mary's, and there, wrapped up in a petticoat, were three studs—diamonds, they looked like, but I heard afterwards they weren't real stones.

'Oh Mary,' said Miss Johnson, holding them out on the palm of her hand, 'how could you?'

Mary said nothing, but went as red as fire.

'Where are the other things you have taken, girl?' asked old Johnson sternly.

'I have taken nothing, sir,' said Mary respectfully but firmly.

'Nonsense,' said Johnson impatiently. 'What's the good of saying that, with those studs staring you in the face? Make a clean breast of it, and we'll see what can be done. If you won't, I must hand you over to Summers here.'

'I know nothing about them, sir,' said Mary quietly. She was as pale now as she had been red the moment before. 'I can't think how they came there.'

'You had better say no more,' said Johnson angrily.—'Summers, do your duty.'

I stepped forward and touched Mary on the shoulder. 'Consider yourself in custody,' I stammered out, thinking as I did so how lightly I'd used those very words not half an hour before.

'Oh Tom, save me!' said she, turning round and clinging to me.

'Yes, yes, honey,' I whispered, putting my arm round her. 'Don't lose heart. It will be all right.'

'Summers,' said the Councillor, staring at us, 'what's the meaning of this?'

'Well, sir, Mary and I have been keeping company for some time, and this has come rather sudden,' I explained. 'Don't you be afraid I'll not do my duty, sir, in spite of my private feelings; but—but'—Then I came to a dead stop, not being able to put into words all that was in my mind. I didn't believe my Mary had taken the things, not likely; but, as they had been found in her box, I wasn't sorry her master was going to charge her. It would be bad for her, of course, for a bit; but for getting at the bottom of a thing, give me police-court proceedings, and no hole-and-corner private-inquiry work with he-said and she-said and tittle-tattle taken as sworn evidence.

I had kept a pretty sharp eye on all parties while the search was being made, and I'd got an idea into my head. It was a wild one, and a very little thing had put it there, but there it was, and I meant to see what I could make of it.

'Bless me! Summers,' said old Johnson, 'I had no idea of this. It must be most distressing to you. But come down-stairs again and let us talk things over.' We went down; and he and his wife and Mary and I went into a room by ourselves, for, as he said, there was no need of the others.

'Now, Mary,' said the Councillor, 'once more, what have you to say?'

'Nothing, sir,' persisted Mary. 'I can't understand how those studs came into my box; I never saw them before.'

'Very well,' said he, frowning. 'If you will have it, you must. Summers shall take you to the station in a cab.'

'Beg your pardon, sir,' I put in, 'but I think

we'd better walk. There will be less notice taken of us.'

I wanted more time to talk to her than a cab would have given us, and of course I meant to take care we didn't look like policeman and prisoner on the way.

'As you like, or as she likes, Summers,' said the Councillor.

'A cab, please, Tom,' whispered Mary; but I shook my head, and, though she looked surprised, she said no more. Mrs Johnson fetched her hat and jacket, and we started, having arranged that old Johnson should follow to charge her after he'd made out a list of the missing articles.

'Now Mary, my dear,' I said as soon as we were outside the gate, 'who did it, do you think?'

'I can't guess, Tom,' she replied. 'I only know I didn't.'

'No, dear,' I said. 'I know that, of course. But have you no notion? Are you friendly with the other servants? Have you noticed either of them extra flush of money lately?'

'They have been very kind to me, Tom,' said she. 'And I know nothing about their money.'

We had to pass the pillar-box where Mary had posted the letter the first day I saw her, and the sight of it brought that letter to my mind, and just for a second my heart went down into my boots.

'Mary,' I said, 'what did you write to Mr Levy about?'

'Mr Levy, Tom?' she repeated, as if the name was quite strange to her. 'I don't know any one called Levy.'

'Wasn't that your own letter you posted the first time I saw you?' I asked.

For a bit she couldn't remember the letter at all, as of course the first sight of me hadn't gone as straight to her heart as the first sight of her had gone to mine; but after I had reminded her of the joke about the little dog, she called it to mind.

'No,' she said. 'Now I remember one of the young ladies gave me that letter to post. But how do you know how it was addressed, and what does it matter?'

'Bless your dear heart,' I replied, fit to jump over the moon with joy, 'I read the address as you held it in your hand; and as for what it matters, right about turn and back to the house, my love, and you'll soon see.'

Then she broke down, and began to cry; but there was no one about, so I let her have her cry out, comforting her as best I could by telling her to keep her heart up, for, if I was on the right tack, they would all be begging her pardon in an hour's time.

When we got back, I asked if I could see Mr Johnson alone, and the first thing he said was that he supposed she had changed her mind and confessed.

'No, sir; it's not that,' I said. 'Do you know that soon after Mary entered your service, one of the members of your family gave her a letter to post, addressed to Levy, the pawnbroker in High Street?'

'No,' said he; 'I didn't know it. But what has that to do with the case in hand, Summers?'

He must have seen what it might have to do

with it as he asked the question, for he went as white as a sheet.

'Well, sir,' I said, 'I don't want to insinuate anything against anybody; but don't you think it would be better to ask a few questions down at Levy's before you go too far to draw back?'

'Perhaps it would,' he said, after he'd sat thinking for about five minutes. 'Can I trust you to ask them, Summers?'

'Certainly you can, sir,' I replied. 'But don't you think you had better go yourself?'

'No,' he said; 'I don't want to hurt your feelings, Summers; but Mary's story about the letter may be false; and even if—if it should turn out that a member of my family has—has had dealings with Levy, justice demands that you and others who heard the girl accused should also know that the accusation is withdrawn. I have no wish to hide anything from you.'

He promised to make it right with the inspector about me leaving the beat, gave me the list he had made out; and off I went, as sure as could be I was right, because the little thing I'd noticed when they searched the boxes was that Miss Johnson was the only one in the room who didn't look surprised when the studs were found.

Old Levy is an honest pawnbroker enough, and his tale was quite straightforward. He'd had dealings with Miss Johnson for months, and she had pawned every one of the things on my list except the studs which were found in Mary's box. She had written to him because she had sprained her ankle a bit at lawn-tennis, and couldn't keep an appointment she'd made, though she wanted five pounds most particularly. He'd sent the money, he told me, and got the security the next time he saw her. He gave me her letter; so I advised him to keep a still tongue in his head—which, being a pawnbroker, he knew how to do—and went back to break the thing gently to old Johnson.

When I showed him the letter, how he did take on, as well he might, having a daughter who could do such a nasty, mean, dirty trick as trying to ruin my poor girl. Taking her sisters' and her mother's jewellery was nothing, compared to trying to hide it in the way she did.

It was hushed up, of course; and what the girl wanted the money for, I never knew. Old Johnson did the right thing when Mary and I were married, which was pretty soon, as she didn't care to stay on after what had happened.

As that's all my story, I'm afraid there isn't much moral to it, except that it proves what I said before—namely, that, when you are falsely accused, the sooner you go before a magistrate the better. How do I make that out? Why, this way. If the case had gone into court, Levy would have come forward as soon as he received the police notice of the missing property; and so, though things would have been more unpleasant for Miss Johnson, Mary would have been right enough. How could she have been cleared without going into court, I should like to know, if she hadn't happened to have a policeman with all his wits about him for a sweetheart? And suppose my mate had been on duty the morning she was given in charge, what then? Why, of course she must have gone before the bench, and they would have discharged her without a stain

on her character. So I think I have good grounds for maintaining that if there is a place where innocence will out, it's a police court, though I'm glad for Mary's sake that I was able to save her from giving a practical proof of the truth of my argument.

FERNLAND.

IN the whole round of the Vegetable Kingdom there are no more beautiful forms of life than Ferns. These lovely children of the shade charm us alike by their graceful forms and exquisite colours. They are universal favourites, and though flowerless, yield us perennial pleasure. The places, too, that they love to beautify with their nodding, delicately cut fronds, are among the most entrancing on our earth's surface. Where the air is musical with the sound of running waters; where the spray of the mountain tarn flashes in the sunbeams; where the shadows of the forest are the deepest, and the soil is the rich mould formed by the leaves of many autumns; on the rock-bound coast where the sea-gull builds her nest and the eagle has her eyrie—there ferns make their homes.

Ferns ('Filices') stand at the head of the flowerless plant-world which includes the fungi, creeping lichens, equisetæ or horse-tails, and seaweeds. These flowerless plants—Cryptogams, as they are botanically named—are the descendants of the great Carboniferous Flora, of which ferns formed a very important part. It is an interesting fact that of the eight great divisions into which modern botanists divide the Fern family, four were in existence during the Carboniferous period; and of other three, fossilised specimens have been found. Therefore, when we look on a large and representative collection of ferns, we see a fair picture, in miniature, of the great cryptogamic forests, whose remains, in the form of coal, are so valuable to the present age.

The ferns found throughout the world up to the present time have been divided by botanists into about three thousand species. The varieties, or forms varying from the specific type, but not sufficiently to justify placing them in separate species, are, however, innumerable. This tendency to vary is one of the most peculiar characteristics of ferns, and will be referred to further on.

The geographical distribution of ferns is a very interesting study. No other order of plants is so widely distributed. They are met with from the equator to well within the Arctic and Antarctic Circles, and only disappear when we reach the sterile regions of the frigid zones. Some make their homes at the sea-level, others at an altitude of sixteen thousand feet. Some grow in shade so dense that almost no other forms of vegetation exist beside them; others grow in the full glare of the sun. They are found in the crevices of rocks, walls, bridges, and buildings where there is no apparent soil for their sustenance; on the banks of streams with their roots immersed in water, and in bog-lands.

Their sizes and modes of growth are also very varied. Some become trees with fronds twenty feet long; others have fronds measuring only

half an inch. Some creep along the ground and over the faces of rocks; others climb the stems of trees and out on the branches, clothing the trees with their bright foliage like ivy. Some have fronds thick and leathery in substance; others are so delicately thin as to be almost transparent. Some, such as the common harts-tongue, have fronds without divisions; others, such as '*Adiantum gracillimum*,' are cut into hundreds of segments.

The variety of colour in fern fronds is greater than is generally supposed. The shades of green range from the palest to the deepest. Some fronds have three colours. '*Pteris tricolor*,' for example, has midribs of dark red, bordered with white merging into green. Other kinds are beautifully variegated with white, yellowish green, and red. The loveliest colours are found in the young fronds. Some of these soon after opening are of a deep crimson colour, gradually changing as they grow older into the normal green of the variety. Others are bright red, pink of various shades, ruby, brown, blue, and bronzy green.

Ferns attain their greatest size and fullest luxuriance in the tropics. The humid heat and dense shade of the great tropical forests produce a congenial home for them; and they are often found there with stems fifty, sixty, and even one hundred feet high. These huge tree-like ferns belong, as a rule, to one of three genera, the '*Dicksonias*,' '*Alsophilas*,' and '*Cyatheas*.' Specimens of '*Cyathea medularis*' have been found in New Zealand with their stems rising to one hundred feet, and crowned with grand masses of feathery fronds. When they attain such dimensions, ferns become prominent and striking objects in the landscape.

To the tropics belong, also, the lovely and unique fern forms which are popularly known as silver and gold leaved ferns, and which are great favourites in this country for greenhouse decoration. The fronds of these kinds, as a rule, on the under sides are coated with a fine farinose powder which assumes different colours according to the variety. Sometimes the powder is bright golden or pale yellow, white, cream, brown, or blue.

However, tropical ferns must always be of secondary importance to us who live in Britain. The most interesting and useful section to us is that which comprises the species indigenous to our country, and a few foreign species which have been found to be hardy in our climate. In Hardy Fernland we possess inexhaustible stores of beautiful forms. An examination of the splendid collection of hardy ferns in the ferneries of the Royal Gardens at Kew, which contain the largest number, in one group, of our native species, shows that they equal in decorative value their exotic brethren, while possessing the advantages of being perfectly hardy, and consequently more easily cultivated.

There are about fifty distinct species of ferns indigenous to Britain. This seems a small number; but these fifty species are found to produce, both in their wild haunts and when grown under cultivation, an almost infinite number of beautiful variations. No other family of plants shows this tendency to vary to such a surprising extent, and to it we owe many of

our most beautiful kinds. When we examine a good collection of ferns, this characteristic is easily seen. If we take, for instance, the well-known hartstongue (*Scolopendrium vulgare*), we find that there is almost no limit to its eccentricities. One of the foremost authorities on cultivated ferns (Mr J. Birkenhead, of Sale), in a recent lecture thus refers to the astonishing variableness of the hartstongue: 'By imagining every degree of serration, laceration, and cutting up of the frond; every degree of unevenness, from the slightly wavy to the deeply goffered; every degree of roughness of surface, from the perfectly smooth to that like a toad's back; every degree of cresting, from the simple fork to the most complicated tuft; every degree of branching, from one division to that in which the plant is a mass of branches difficult to separate into fronds; fronds drawn out and fronds abruptly terminated; narrow fronds and broad ones; fronds with horns below, others with horns above, others, again, with pockets; fronds bearing bulbils at the edges, and others with young plants on their surfaces; fronds deformed, every one being different from every other on the same plant—in fact, imagine every variation in form beautiful and ugly, and an idea may be obtained of the appearance presented by the thousands of varieties of *Scolopendrium vulgare*.'

The graceful lady-fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), which is so common in our moist woods and shady lanes, is another species which produces many variations from its normal form. The variety named '*Plumosum elegans*' has fronds of pale green cut into minute segments; '*Plumosum multifidum*' has heavy tassels added to the tips of its plume-like fronds; '*Calothrix*' has glossy fronds so minutely divided that when looked at from a short distance it appears like a green mist; *Victoria*, first found wild in Scotland in 1861, and sometimes called the 'Queen of Lady-ferns,' has fronds two feet long heavily crested at their apices, with narrow segments crossing each other like lattice-work. Other varieties have long, narrow, slender fronds; others, again, have them broad and leaf-like. Our native shield ferns (*Polystichums*) have also given us many beautiful and curious varieties.

The work of raising new varieties, or of searching for them in their wild haunts, has become to many fern-lovers a fascinating one; and the progress already made in this direction has been so marked and gratifying, that we may confidently look for the addition of other gems to our collections.

In connection with the subject of variableness in ferns, it is interesting to note that our noblest and largest indigenous species, the royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), has been found, so far, to produce only one or two abnormal forms. But this will hardly be regretted by any one who has seen this truly majestic fern in its favourite habitats.

The majority of British ferns are deciduous in their wild haunts, the first severe frosts of winter blighting their tender fronds. But this is amply compensated for by the rich tints many of them assume in their dying hours. The common bracken (*Pteris aquilina*) is a fine example of this change in colour. Its leaves assume in early

winter every shade of ochre, sienna, and even lake, changing as they die into deep brown. Our artists have paid a high tribute to the beauty of this noble native of British Fernland by introducing it into the foregrounds of some of their loveliest woodland scenes.

When grown under careful cultivation, however, a large number of our native ferns become evergreen—that is, they throw up young fronds before the old ones are faded.

To those who have shaded spots in their gardens, and especially to those whose gardens are situated in smoky districts, we commend the culture of a few hardy ferns. They will grow luxuriantly in an atmosphere and in light in which most flowering plants would languish and die. We often see in towns and cities attenuated specimens of the geranium, fuchsia, and other similar plants, making their surroundings more depressing by their sickly growth. These, with much advantage to their owners, might be discarded, and their places occupied by a selection of our indigenous ferns, which would brighten the spots at every season.

In the ornamentation of public parks and gardens, also, our native ferns should be much more largely used than they now are. In these places, except in very favourable positions, it is almost impossible to get flowering plants to grow in a satisfactory way, and the little success which is attained is got by means of an altogether disproportionate amount of care and expense.

Fernland has no bright flowers to show us, yet there is no class of plants that gives us more continuous pleasure. Roses, orchids, begonias, and other plants which produce flowers with brilliant colours, delight us only during their blooming seasons. At other times they cannot be said to be attractive. But ferns are always beautiful, and in a condition to give us lovely fronds to heighten the charms of the flowers that are in bloom.

NOCTURNE.

NIGHT broodeth still o'er land and sea,
And silently
The silver moon her quiet radiance sheds.
Upon the bosom of the deep
Her quivering beams are rocked to sleep,
Until the Night with joyous Morning weds.

Across the yellow reach of sand,
On either hand
Creep the slow waters softly murmuring;
The moonlight falls in glittering bars
Upon their breast, the watching stars
Gaze downward on the wave-crests, wondering.

A tangled mesh of seaweed floats
Among the boats
That idly rock upon the sleeping tide,
And farther, where the flood is deep,
The salmon-meshes ebb and sweep
Among the darkling shadows far and wide.

LYDIA M. WOOD.

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THE FIRST STEAMER TO CROSS THE ATLANTIC.

IN many quarters the idea seems still to prevail—and we gave expression to it quite recently in an article on 'Some Early Steamships' (page 155)—that the first steamer to cross the Atlantic was the 'Savannah,' which in 1819 made the voyage from the port of the same name in Georgia to Liverpool in twenty-five days. The 'Savannah,' however, was not a steamship, and was under sail more than two-thirds of the way across. She was a full-rigged packet-ship, and had on her deck a small steam-engine, by means of which motion was given to the craft in smooth water when the wind failed. The log is full of such entries as: 'At 8 A.M. tacked ship to the westward;' 'Took in the mizzen and foretop-gallant sails;' 'Got the steam up, and it came on to blow fresh—we took wheels in on deck in thirty minutes;' 'Stopped wheels to clean the clinkers out of the furnace;' 'Started wheels,' and so on.

In 1838—as stated in the article on 'Early Steamships' already referred to—the 'Sirius' and the 'Great Western' successfully made the journey from England to America; but five years before that date, Canadian enterprise accomplished the feat of bridging the Atlantic Ocean with a little vessel propelled wholly by steam. This was the 'Royal William,' whose beautiful model was exhibited at the British Naval Exhibition in London, where she attracted the attention and curiosity of the first seamen in the empire. The 'Royal William'—named in honour of the reigning sovereign—was built in the city of Quebec by a Scotchman, James Goudie, who had served his time and learned his art at Greenock. The keel was laid in the autumn of 1830; and her builder, then in his twenty-second year, writes: 'As I had the drawings and the form of the ship, at the time a novelty in construction, it devolved upon me to lay off and expand the draft to its full dimensions on the floor of the loft, where I made several alterations in the lines as improvements.

The steamship being duly commenced, the work progressed rapidly; and in May following, was duly launched, and before a large concourse of people was christened the "Royal William." She was then taken to Montreal to have her engines, where I continued to superintend the finishing of the cabins and deck-work. When completed, she had her trial trip, which proved quite satisfactory. Being late in the season before being completed, she only made a few trips to Halifax.'

The launching of this steamer was a great event in Quebec. The Governor-general, Lord Aylmer, and his wife were present, the latter giving the vessel her name. Military bands supplied the music, and the shipping in the harbour was gay with bunting. The city itself wore a holiday look. The 'Royal William,' propelled by steam alone, traded between Quebec and Halifax. While at the last-named place, she attracted the notice of Mr Samuel Cunard, afterwards Sir Samuel, the founder of the great trans-continental line which bears his name. It is said that the 'Royal William' convinced him that steam was the coming force for ocean navigation. He asked many questions about her, took down the answers in his note-book, and subsequently became a large stock-holder in the craft.

The cholera of 1832 paralysed business in Canada, and trade was at a stand-still for a time. Like other enterprises at this date, the 'Royal William' experienced reverses, and she was doomed to be sold at sheriff's sale. Some Quebec gentlemen bought her in, and resolved to send her to England to be sold. In 1833 the eventful voyage to Britain was made successfully, and without mishap of any kind. The 'Royal William's' proportions were as follows: Builder's measurement, 1370 tons; steamboat measurement, as per Act of Parliament, 830 tons; length of keel, 146 feet; length of deck from head to taffrail, 176 feet; breadth of beam inside the paddle-boxes, 29 feet 4 inches; outside, 43 feet 10 inches; depth of hold, 17 feet 9 inches. On

the 4th of August 1833, commanded by Captain John M'Dougall, she left Quebec, via Pictou, Nova Scotia, for London, under steam, at five o'clock in the morning. She made the passage in twenty-five days. Her supply of coal was 254 chaldrons, or over 330 tons. Her captain wrote: 'She is justly entitled to be considered the first steamer that crossed the Atlantic by steam, having steamed the whole way across.'

About the end of September 1833, the 'Royal William' was disposed of for ten thousand pounds sterling, and chartered to the Portuguese Government to take out troops for Dom Pedro's service. Portugal was asked to purchase her for the navy; but the admiral of the fleet, not thinking well of the scheme, declined to entertain the proposition. Captain M'Dougall was master of the steamer all this time. He returned with her to London with invalids and disbanded Portuguese soldiers, and laid her up off Deptford Victualling Office. In July, orders came to fit out the 'Royal William' to run between Oporto and Lisbon. One trip was made between these ports, and also a trip to Cadiz for specie for the Portuguese Government.

On his return to Lisbon, Captain M'Dougall was ordered to sell the steamer to the Spanish Government, through Don Evanston Castor da Perez, then the Spanish ambassador to the court of Lisbon. The transaction was completed on the 10th of September 1834, when the 'Royal William' became the 'Ysabel Segunda,' and the first war-steamer the Spaniards ever possessed. She was ordered to the north coast of Spain against Don Carlos. Captain M'Dougall accepted the rank and pay of a Commander, and, by special proviso, was guaranteed six hundred pounds sterling per annum, and the contract to supply the squadron with provisions from Lisbon. The 'Ysabel Segunda' proceeded to the north coast; and about the latter part of 1834, she returned to Gravesend, to be delivered up to the British Government, to be converted into a war-steamer at the Imperial Dockyard. The crew and officers were transferred to the 'Royal Tar,' chartered and armed as a war-steamer, with six long thirty-two pounders, and named the 'Reyna Gobernadora,' the name intended for the 'City of Edinburgh' steamer, which was chartered to form part of the squadron. When completed, she relieved the 'Royal Tar,' and took her name.

In his interesting letter, from which these facts are drawn, to Robert Christie, the Canadian historian, Captain M'Dougall thus completes the story of the pioneer Atlantic steamer: 'The "Ysabel Segunda," when completed at Sheerness Dockyard, took out General Alava, the Spanish ambassador, and General Evans and most of his staff officers, to Saint Andero, and afterwards to St Sebastian, having hoisted the Commodore's broad pennant again at Saint Andero; and was afterwards employed in cruising between that port and Fuente Arabia, and acting in concert with the Legion against Don Carlos until the time of their service expired in 1837. She was then sent to Portsmouth with a part of those discharged from the service, and from thence she was taken to London, and detained in the City Canal by Commodore Henry until the claims

of the officers and crew on the Spanish Government were settled, which was ultimately accomplished by bills, and the officers and crew discharged from the Spanish service about the latter end of 1837, and "Ysabel Segunda" delivered up to the Spanish ambassador, and after having her engines repaired, returned to Spain, and was soon afterwards sent to Bordeaux, in France, to have the hull repaired. But on being surveyed, it was found that the timbers were so much decayed, that it was decided to build a new vessel to receive the engines, which was built there, and called by the same name, and now [1853] forms one of the royal steam-navy of Spain, while her predecessor was converted into a hulk at Bordeaux.'

This, in brief, is the history of the steamer which played so important a rôle in the maritime annals of Canada, England, and Spain. Her model is safely stored in the rooms of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, where it is an object of profound veneration. At the request of the Government, a copy of the model has been made, and will form part of the Canadian exhibit to the World's Fair at Chicago this year.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXV.—ISABEL'S PROGRESS.

'FORTUNATE,' says the old wise man, 'is the country that has no annals;' but fortunate is *not* the story that has no incident. 'Emotion in action' must be the maxim of the story-teller, even as it is of the dramatist; emotion, therefore, that is unexpressed in action is scarcely tangible enough material for the novelist or dramatist to deal with; it is fitter for the treatment of the rhapsodist or philosopher. Yet there are periods in otherwise active lives that are charged merely with ordinary feeling and desire, with growing knowledge and experience: what is he who undertakes to tell the story of these lives to make of such periods? He finds it hard to write about them, except in such a way as makes the reader inclined to skip them; and yet they are of the greatest importance: they are like the pools or quiet stretches of water in the course of a stream, which reflect heaven and seem as deep as the foundations of the earth, and which give volume and force to the next sweep and rush and swirl of current.

Isabel had now entered upon one of these periods. The six weeks or so of holiday which she allowed herself passed quickly and pleasantly with baths in the sea, walks to Kirk Braddan and over Douglas Head, drives over high, breezy moorland to Sulby Glen, Peel, Ramsey, Port St Mary, and Port Erin; and sea-trips now in the *Sea-mew* and now in the *Swiftsure*; for George came regularly on the Friday afternoon in his yacht, and returned on the Monday morning. He was persistent in his desire and demand for races with Lord Clitheroe's yacht, and was loud in his resolve to put new and powerful engines in his own, to make it the swiftest thing that moved in water. Isabel was compelled to be interested in him and his doings, and, considering his pre-

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tensions towards her, to study him with intention. She found him boyish, if not boisterous, in manner, like a lad escaped for a holiday; with a strong appreciation of the substantial fare of life, of all things that can be bought with cash or a cheque; with fine physical health, and a sturdy confidence in his own judgment; affectionate, but scarcely deferential, to his father, whom he plainly considered somewhat old-fashioned, and whom he called 'dad.' Thus George appeared to Isabel, and she was not sure whether she liked the presentment; on the whole, she thought she did not, and she frequently found herself, before she was aware, making George stand in her mind beside Alan Ainsworth. She wondered if George had just developed those qualities and characteristics which now marked him, or if he had always had them and she merely had not noticed them; but if he had shown them, must she not have noticed them? She concluded that the high position of importance and responsibility to which his father had recently raised him had brought out more strongly qualities which had always been his. But, it must be said, George did not force the study of himself upon her. He talked with her, laughed with her, and was generally attentive to her, but he did not notoriously seek her company; and, after the one small outburst which I have recorded, he did not say anything to her that was charged with special feeling—all which piqued her somewhat; for she was a woman, and no woman—not even a sensible and clear-seeing girl like Isabel—likes a man who pretends to be overwhelmingly in love with her to behave as if he were indifferent, however indifferent she herself may be.

Thus pleasantly and quickly passed the days and weeks till the middle of September, when the whole party said farewell to the Isle of Man. It was only at the last moment of adieu that George showed he still had a memory.

'When,' said he, 'shall we meet again, Bell? Shall I come to town at Christmas, or will you come north? A year,' he added, 'will be a terribly long time'—with clear allusion to the year and a day which were to date from the previous Whitsuntide.

The Suffields, as well as Isabel and her father, returned to London; for there was to be an autumn session of Parliament, and a kind of half or veiled season of society. The session did not actually begin till the second week of October, until which time Lord Clitheroe went shooting. It was a kind of open secret that with the re-assembling of Parliament his engagement to Euphemia should be formally recognised, and there was something of a flutter in the family accordingly.

What with these matters and her own arrangements for settling down to the enjoyment of her wealth in proper form, Isabel was fully occupied for two or three weeks after her return to London. She went back to her old lodgings in the Marylebone Road for a little while—she declined, though invited, to go to Rutland Gate with her father—until she had found a flat and bought enough furniture to enter upon its occupation. Her final 'good-bye' to Mrs Wiffin was affecting. Isabel kissed her and thanked her for all her solicitude in the past.

'Oh, my dear,' said Mrs Wiffin, crying a little,

'you might have been my own daughter, I liked you so well. And thankful I am that nothing but good luck has come to you under my roof. But, oh, the world is full of snares and viles, and I hope that now you won't get into any of them, if it ain't presumptuous in me to say so. And you'll come and see me sometimes.'

Isabel had found for herself a delightful flat—or, at least, a flat which she intended to make delightful—in a block in Cromwell Road. The more substantial and necessary furniture she had, of course, to acquire at once to render it merely habitable; but such things as would make it a pleasant place to live in she set herself to seek out, to select and buy by degrees. It was, and continued to be for months, a minor harmonic joy of her daily existence to journey into strange regions of London and visit the unlikeliest shops in her quest for treasures of one kind and another. She found, for instance, a fine Japanese Buddha in bronze in a marine dealer's in the East End; a finely carved Chinese table in ebony and ivory in an old curiosity shop in Lambeth; and a beautiful Teniers in a picture-shop in Hammer-smith. Nor did she disdain to look at the more pretentious and dearer wares of the shops of Regent Street, Piccadilly, and Bond Street. She took her father with her on these expeditions, on the pretence of putting herself under his protection; and he was immensely pleased with his responsibility, although, invariably, when active care or decision had to be shown, as in crossing a street or calling a cab, it was his daughter that was to the fore.

At the same time she was not forgetting her scheme for the benefit of Aged Governesses. She did not begin with the display of a prospectus and a subscription list; she intended that the Institution should be all her own; she even thought that for the present she would dispense with the aid of her proposed Committee of Gentlemen; for she was shy of discussing her plans with any one, and she wished to be, if she could contrive it, merely a kind of beneficent daughter to a few of those who had grown old, gray, and lonely in the thankless occupation to which she herself had given the spring of her days. The formality of the ordinary charitable Institution, with its painfully regular habits and rules, with its generally barrack-like existence, she abhorred; such arrangements she resolved she would not have for her Aged: they would make them feel too much as if they themselves were now put to school; they would, she was sure, be resented in secret, and she knew that dislike of what you should appear grateful for tends to create a hideous, hypocritical temper. Therefore, her regulations would be loose and elastic; her Aged should feel comfortable and at home; and to that end—and also because her income would not bear the expense of a large Institution—she took a modest and cheerful house in Chelsea, sufficient to accommodate some ten persons, and no more. She intended that her *protégées* should do the light work of the household themselves—it would do them good to be occupied a little in that way; and she believed—judging by herself—that they would like to be so occupied—and therefore she introduced no great establishment of servants. She herself would be the governing head of the household; and her resident deputy was to be Miss

Brown, the Aged governess who had been the friend of her youth in the Yorkshire school to which her aunt had sent her.

She carried her arrangements through so unhesitatingly that by the beginning of November she had five Aged vestals, including Miss Brown, established in the Chelsea house; and since her own abode was also now in a fairly presentable condition, and since her friends and relations had been for some time asking her when she was going to begin to receive visitors, she determined to give a 'house-warming' on the day dedicated to the memory of Guy Fawkes.

Her dining-room was not large enough to entertain a numerous company. The party at dinner made only an octave, but it was a harmonious octave: Isabel and her father—Alexander had respectfully declined the invitation: feasts and large gatherings, he said, did not agree with his constitution, and, moreover, he had no raiment splendid enough to do her honour—her uncle and aunt, Phemy and Lord Clitheroe, Ainsworth and Miss Brown; Miss Brown's charges, the Aged vestals, were coming in later in their best ancient bibs and tuckers.

'You might have asked a young woman, my dear,' whispered Mrs Sufield to her niece, 'to meet Mr Ainsworth—Miss Bruno, the novelist, for instance. Miss Brown may be nice and intellectual, but she is scarcely the person to set a young man down with.'

'I didn't think of that!' said Isabel. Could it be, she wondered, that Mr Ainsworth might desire and take pleasure in the society of a young woman?—a young woman other than herself, that is? It smote her with a strange pang that he might.

Yet Mr Ainsworth found great pleasure in sitting next to Miss Brown, who was one of those old maids that make us wonder at the perversity and stupidity of men in choosing mates. She had probably never been asked in marriage; yet it would have been difficult for a man to find a woman who would have been a wiser, tenderer, or more cheerful companion through life. She had never been handsome: she was little, thin, and dry, but there was about her a suggestion of past pleasantness of face and figure such as resides in a Normandy pippin. She had intellect and vivacity, and such an array of learning, and withal so much modesty in the display of it, as put Ainsworth to shame. She knew the works of French authors through and through—it was she who had given Isabel her taste for the literature of France—and she had known Frederic Lemaitre—who had taught her elocution—and the great Dumas. She told Ainsworth strange and vivacious stories of these two worthies, to his immense delight and benefit. She discussed French plays with him, and Ainsworth was moved to confide to her the secret that he was trying to write a play. Then she ventured to express to him decided and well-matured opinions of how a play was to be made, and advised him to study Sardon for construction and Labiche for good-nature.

'What a perfect treasure—a *thesaurus*!—your Miss Brown is!' exclaimed Ainsworth to Isabel, when they had all returned to the drawing-room. 'She ought to be editing a Review instead of supervising your Aged!'

'Yes,' said Isabel mischievously, 'she knows all about plays too—doesn't she?—and can advise about the making of them.'

'Yes; she can!' said Ainsworth with a fine blush.

'And she is so charming and versatile,' added Isabel, 'that she can win the confidence of an ambitious dramatist at their first meeting!'

Ainsworth considered her closely a moment: 'Did she tell you?'

'Tell me what?'

'That I had confided to her that I am writing a play?'

'Oh no. I heard you tell her. And,' said she, with an involuntary touch of pique, 'I thought it a little odd that I should not have heard of it before. I—used to hear all you were doing,' she was about to add, but she refrained.

'I meant to keep the matter secret,' said he. 'But indeed it is not much of a secret: I am only trying: I shall very likely fail.'

She was silent; and he was silent—though he looked at her as if he would speak. He had it in his mind to confess that he had made a secret of the writing of the play, because he meant it as a means of raising him to her level: he was resolved to win her, but he would only ask her to put her hand in his when he was in a position equal, or almost equal, to hers; and for a writing man to attain such a position in these days he believed the stage was the only gangway. But he did not say that; he said something else instead.

'You remember,' said he with a tender smile, 'those strange lines I heard your father murmur when I went to bring him from that opium-place?—"Raynor of gold and jewels; Raynor of silver and pearls!"—I often think of them, and wonder if your father had a vision of your coming wealth—saw that you were going to be a Rancee. "Raynor?" In your case it ought to be "*Reine d'or*." I think we must call you *Reine d'or*—queen of gold.'

'That comes,' said Isabel, 'of talking so much about French things with Miss Brown. But,' she added, taking his persiflage with unusual seriousness, 'why are you always talking of my gold?—why does my wealth dwell so in your mind? Is that not a little vulgar? Forgive my saying so. But has my poor wealth made any difference in me? Am I not the same to my friends as I have always been? I wish to be! I hope I am!'

'You are, you are, Miss Raynor!' asseverated Ainsworth. 'You are always generous and frank and good! It is vulgar, of course, to consider wealth too much; but—I cannot help thinking of it. Forgive me. I need your forgiveness and your indulgence!'

'Try,' said she, seriously, 'to think I am as I was; and let us say no more about it.'

They were then driven apart by the influx of after-dinner guests, among whom were the Aged in their best raiment. That was a proud evening for them; for not only were they there on an equal footing with such people as they had been wont to serve and to cringe a little to—wealthy people, and people of title, like Lord Clitheroe and his mother Lady Padiham—but they actually saw in the flesh some artists and authors of whom they had hitherto only heard. Their crowning triumph, however, was when one of themselves—

the versatile Miss Brown—at the request of their hostess and protectress, rose and recited in the most laughably dramatic manner—she had been taught by an eminent French actor—a French ‘piece’ (‘Le Curé de Cucugnan’ of M. Alphonse Daudet)—recited it with so beautiful a French accent that those who understood French applauded with extreme enthusiasm; and those who did not understand applauded as much as those who did, so that they might not be considered slack in good manners nor backward in education.

They came, and they went; and at midnight Isabel sat again alone in her drawing-room—her father had gone to his room an hour before. Her house had been warmed by the friendly breath of thirty or forty relations, friends, and acquaintances; she might now reckon herself established as a person of some consequence; but, as she looked round the room, and thought who had sat here and who there, and how flat and unsatisfactory it had all been, she found herself recalling with especial delight those summer evenings not so very long ago when Ainsworth would drop into her Marylebone lodgings and straightway plunge into talk of great books and great things—talk into the rush and swirl of which she also would be caught, while Alexander would sit by with the air of a philosopher whose knowledge of the matters being discussed was too deep for words. Those days being gone, and they were better than these!

THE SENSE OF SIGHT IN ANIMALS.

In discussing the senses of animals, Sight brings us to a difficult part of our subject, because, as even plants are sensitive to light, it is not always easy to know whether the lower animals simply have a similar sensitiveness, or are actually able to see: probably many can only distinguish light from darkness; such may be the function of the eye-spots which occur in quite low organisms.

True vision—the forming of an image on the retina or by mosaic vision—most likely only occurs in the higher forms of creation. There are quite eyeless creatures, for example, earth-worms, which yet in some way are aware not only of light, but even of light of different colours, preferring red to blue. Probably the whole surface of their skin is sensitive. This curious skin-sensitiveness is still further proved by some facts given in a recent book entitled *The Colours of Animals*, where Mr Poulton describes some experiments he has made, extending over several years, on the variable colouring of insects. One year he experimented on no fewer than seven hundred larvæ of one kind of butterfly alone (the peacock, which appears to be one of the most sensitive), placing them in different coloured surroundings. These larvæ produced pupæ of almost every colour, from black to light gray and very golden, passing on into white, the colours corresponding very closely to that of their immediate surroundings. Even when the larvæ were blinded, and the surroundings subsequently changed, the colour changed correspondingly—thus proving that vision is not necessary, but that the whole surface of the skin

must be sensitive, not only to light, but to changes of colour. Mr Poulton is still continuing these experiments, and communicated some further results he has obtained to the Edinburgh meeting of the British Association in 1892.

Molluscs have eyes: some in their tentacles, some between the feelers, or on a stalk at the side or the back; but with most, as with the snail, the eye merely appears to distinguish light from darkness; the cuttle-fish, however, is an exception—it has a highly developed eye, and probably good vision. Another mollusc, the enchiurium, a kind of slug, is also more advanced than most others of its kind; for it has two kinds of eyes, one kind like that of other molluscs, and the other like man's; the latter are very numerous (from twelve to one hundred) all over the back. The nautilus has a very exceptional eye; there is, in fact, no similar eye known in Nature: it is simplicity itself, although the nautilus in other ways is a highly developed mollusc. It has none of the parts of an eye with which we are familiar, but is simply a small round space, the surface of which is just like the skin around, only that there is a minute pin-hole in it. Through this hole the sea-water enters and fills the globe of the eye, bathing the retina, over which are spread the fibres of the optic nerve. Possibly this was the original, primitive form of the eye; but in all other molluscs the cavity is closed and more or less filled by a lens.

Many of the lower creatures possess the remarkable power of renewing lost members, and even sensory organs: for example, if the eyes of the garden snail be cut off, they are soon reproduced quite as perfect in structure as they originally were. They also appear to be renewable an indefinite number of times; for on one unfortunate snail this experiment was repeated twenty times, and the eyes were renewed as often, the last eye being as good as the first! The snail's eyes are on its hinder and longer horn or tentacle; but it appears unable to see any object farther away than a quarter of an inch. It is said that a glow-worm can distinguish large letters at a distance of ten or more feet; and even fine lines only two hundredths of an inch apart when they are not more than half an inch distant.

Amongst crustacea there is a great difference in the organ of sight: it ranges from a simple eye-spot in some species up to two compound eyes on a movable eye-stalk (as in the crab and lobster) with complete optical apparatus. Some have both simple and compound eyes—which we shall describe more in detail directly—but usually only the latter, and if the former are also present, there are only two or three. Shore and land crabs are quite equal to most insects in their rapidity of perception. In some minute crustacea, the eyes are so large that the little creatures appear to be all eye.

The sight of insects has been made a special study, and there is no doubt that all can see, with the exception of a few living in subterranean caves, or burrows, who have lost this power. Most insects have two kinds of eyes: the large compound eye—one on each side of the head; and the ocelli or simple eyes, of which there are generally three, placed in a triangle between the other two. As a rule, the ocelli merely consist

of a lens, behind which is a gelatinous liquid, composed of transparent cells, and behind this the retina, in which are a number of the so-called 'rods.' The compound eyes are more complex: the surface is generally divided into hexagons, each of which is called a facet, and usually forms a lens; or we may call the compound eyes six-sided eye-masses; beneath each facet is a cone, the farther end of which is surrounded by cells, in which is a nerve-rod in connection with the fibres of the optic nerve. Whether this organ forms one aggregate eye, or whether each facet is an eye, is not known. The latter, however, seems improbable, for a queen-bee has nearly five thousand of these facets, a worker-bee six thousand, and a drone eight thousand; the house-fly about the same; while moths have eleven or twelve thousand; butterflies seventeen thousand; and some beetles as many as twenty-five thousand facets. If each cone behind these numerous facets makes a separate image, it is very difficult to understand how so many separate images can be combined. It is more probable that insects see by light passing through the facets on to the cones at the back, and so to the nerve-fibres; each cone receiving only a very small portion; hence insects' vision would be a mosaic—a series of minute pictures, larger and wider, the larger the eye, smaller and more distinct when the facets are small and numerous. This theory, though still disputed, seems now almost established by the recent researches of Exner and Watase.

However this may be, it is probable that the ocellus only distinguishes light from darkness, while the compound eye forms images; for the ocellus may be covered over without affecting the insect's movements, whereas, when the compound eyes are covered, the insect behaves as if in the dark, hitting against objects and flying against walls, &c. For nocturnal insects, it is a great advantage to have so many images superposed, while the pigment being mobile, may act as a screen to cut off too much light. If the compound eye of an insect is removed and freed from the pigment or colouring matter, objects may be seen through it from behind; but the field of vision is very small.

A scorpion, though it can boast of six eyes, has very imperfect vision: if approached noiselessly, it can easily be captured, and seems quite unaware of the presence of flies or other prey until they move.

The facets in the compound eye of an ant vary in number from nothing up to twelve hundred. The ocelli vary too; there are never more than three, sometimes only one, and in some workers none at all. Mr Bates, in his *Naturalist on the Amazon*, mentions one kind of ant found there, called the Saüba ant, which, besides having the usual three classes—the males, females, and workers (leaf-carriers, &c.)—that other ants have, has also three kinds of workers, one set living wholly underground, and only to be seen by disturbing the nest. They then emerge in alarm from their burrows, and are seen to have very large heads, not smooth like other workers, but covered with hairs; and in the middle of the forehead is a twin ocellus or simple eye, the usual compound eyes being at the sides of the head. This curious frontal eye is not known in any other kind of

ant, and the appearance of these strange creatures reminds one, says Mr Bates, of the Cyclopes of Homeric fame. One species of ant has not the usual compound eye, the organ of sight simply consisting of one lens. Another nearly blind species, living in dark places and tunnels, has deep-set eyes; another none, though the eye-sockets are visible; another, again, has neither eyes nor sockets: these latter live and move wholly under covered roads or tunnels of their own building.

A small organ in our brains—the size of a hazel nut, and called from its shape the pineal gland—is considered by some to have once been a rudimentary eye! This rudimentary eye is found in all vertebrates and in some fossils; it probably was once a real third organ of vision; so apparently the vertebrates had once a central eye. By-and-by we shall be finding that all these wonderful old myths had a foundation in fact.

Curiously enough, many insects have a visual field of half a sphere, owing to the convex form of the eye, so that they can see objects partly behind and at the side as well as in front of them; so can a chameleon. It is, however, very difficult to say what and how much insects see; probably they can only see objects that are very near, the distance of about a millimetre, or one-twenty-fifth of an inch, being that at which they can see best. To a wasp, the distance of twenty feet corresponds to what one hundred and sixty feet would be to a man. The colour-sense of insects we shall refer to subsequently.

Spiders, which must no longer be called insects, have six or eight ocelli, arranged in a pattern on the top of their heads, but they have no compound eye at all, and are very short-sighted; probably they cannot see at a greater distance than four inches. They are easily deceived by artificial flies; will try their utmost to eat cork or india-rubber when it is placed on the web, and can even be repeatedly deceived in this way without learning wisdom. In another case, after a female spider had laid its eggs and rolled them into a ball, this ball was moved just two inches away, and the unhappy spider was not only unable to find it, but spent nearly two hours looking for it. She scarcely seemed able to see it even at the distance of half an inch. Nor do they know their own bags of eggs from other bags. They will continue carrying these bags about even when all the eggs have been removed and replaced by a piece of lead! Yet some spiders at all events can see their prey and can distinguish colours; and either by sight or some other means can find and will readily drink drops of water scattered about. In one species the eyes of the male are near the top of a long, slender footstalk—perhaps to aid in the search for females; but practically, their sense of sight is almost absent, and, as we have seen, they are decidedly stupid.

Many reptiles depend for their food upon the accuracy of their sight; if a chameleon is watched while catching insects, its unerring aim cannot but be noticed, though its range of vision is probably limited. A chameleon has, however, the curious property of being able to move its two eyes independently of each other, so that one can be looking up and the other down, or one behind

and the other in front. At the same time, its eyelids also form a second pupil, as it were, to the eye; so that it has curious properties, although it has been disrespectfully likened to a boiled pea with an ink-spot.

The eyes of deep-sea fish are very varied; some have neither eyes nor sight; others have greatly enlarged eyeballs, so as to catch the least glimpse of light. Their eyes tend either to disappear or to be unusually efficient; but since no trace of sunlight can penetrate to any great depth, and it is probably quite dark beyond a depth of some two hundred fathoms, of what use can eyes be? Fish have been captured at a depth of nearly three thousand fathoms, where there must be not only absolute stillness, but also total darkness—except for the fact that some of these deep-sea creatures are phosphorescent, and therefore luminous. This fact was first ascertained in the *Challenger* expedition. Since then, Mr Alcock of the Indian Marine Survey has found that some deep-sea crustaceans have a similar power, one large prawn quite lighting up a bucketful of water in which it was placed. Fish with large eyes have therefore a better chance of finding food (and mates); but they cannot wholly depend upon sight, since some have quite abandoned all attempts to see. Some, again, have luminous organs on their head or body or tail, which are under their control, so that they can actually throw light at pleasure on their prey or extinguish it in times of danger. Thus the Angler, amongst others, attracts its prey by means of these coloured lures or phosphorescent lights. It has been well said that these 'vast profounds of the deep have become a sort of almshouse or asylum, whereunto antiquated forms have retired, and amid the changeless environment, have dwelt for ages unaltered.'

As is well known, the eyes of flat-fish—plaice, soles, &c.—are both on one side of the head. This is not, however, the case when these fish are born; originally, like the majority of us, they have an eye on each side of the head; but when they give up swimming about, and lie in hiding on one side at the bottom of the sea, the eye on the under side would be useless; it therefore gradually travels round the head till it is near the other eye, on the coloured side, which is directed toward the light. On the whole, fish have very large eyes, but not very keen sight, although they can perceive their prey or danger; one very odd-looking tropical fish, that walks on its front fins, is much above the average in the way of sight: this is doubtless necessary for its existence, since insects form its prey. Many fish, however, have an accurate vision for objects near at hand, as may be seen in the way they discover shrimps or other food when almost buried; but few appear able to see objects at a greater distance than four feet in the water, and about three feet upwards. A man standing fifteen feet away can be seen by some; but, owing to the refractive power of water, he would doubtless be greatly magnified. The pupils of a fish's eye do not, as a rule, alter in size with the changes in intensity of the light; and in many, a change in the size of the eyelids marks the changes of the seasons; in some, the eyelids become so fat in the spawning season as almost to hide the eye! Some sharks and a few of the lower mammals have a third

eyelid or nictitating membrane, principally of use to clean the eyeball.

Birds have very acute vision; perhaps the most acute of any creature, and the sense is also more widely diffused over the retina than is the case with man; consequently, a bird can see sideways as well as objects in front of it. A bird sees—showing great uneasiness in consequence—a hawk long before it is visible to man; so, too, fowls and pigeons find minute scraps of food, distinguishing them from what appear to us exactly similar pieces of earth or gravel. Young chickens are also able to find their own food—knowing its position and how distant it is—as soon as they are hatched; whereas a child only very gradually learns either to see or to understand the distance of objects. Several birds—apparently the young of all those that nest on the ground—can see quite well directly they come out of the shell; but the young of birds that nest in trees or on rocks are born blind, and have to be fed.

Burrowing rodents, such as rats and squirrels, as we might expect, and also insectivores (moles, &c.), have a very rudimentary organ of sight. The walrus has not good sight either; at all events, out of the water it seems unable to see a man even when he is just in front of it, though it has keen enough hearing, and could *smell* him one thousand feet away, if to windward. When startled, the walrus rotates its eyes without moving its head, which gives it a very odd expression. Monkeys, as we should expect, have sight more like our own, and readily distinguish colour. In one instance, sugar-candy of various colours was provided for them; they invariably chose green first—perhaps because it was more like their usual herbaceous food—and then white; no other colours were touched till these were all eaten.

It is, however, hardly necessary to speak of the sense of sight in the higher animals, as it is so much like our own, except to notice that few of them depend so much upon this sense as we do. This is very observable with cats and dogs, who, though they have keen sight, yet rely far more upon their senses of hearing and of smell. In most mammals and the higher vertebrates, as with ourselves, the eye consists of parts admitting light and concentrating it on an expansion of the optic nerve which lines the back of the eyeball; sometimes one layer of tissue is modified into a coloured and light-reflecting surface.

THE SACRED BEETLE.

CHAPTER III.

THE following morning—or, rather, I should say, that morning—Dr Carl von Eberstein appeared at the breakfast table with a very worn and haggard face indeed. 'Looks as if he'd been on the spree for a week!' murmured the Masher to Mrs Parson. But, to his discomfiture, that lady eyed the youth from head to foot with a scornful glance, and said in reply: 'I daresay *you* know all about how a gentleman looks when he has been, as you so elegantly term it, "on the spree for a week." I call it a most *in-ter-est-ing* pallor, which improves his always good-looking countenance.' (Her husband stared at her, a potato harpooned on his fork, making various blind and ineffectual

shots at his mouth with it.) 'A-hem! Dr von Eberstein, I trust your zeal for midnight exploration has not ended in giving you a cold?' This drew all eyes on our hero, who blushed and looked uncomfortable.

'Oh no, madam; I am quite well, I thank you; only a little tired.' And he applied himself afresh to his breakfast.

'Dear me! now I come to look at him, *what* a nice face Dr Eberstein has,' murmured Miss Priscilla Jenkins to her sister, Miss Hester.

'If you hadn't been half blind,' answered that lady snappishly—for she had a short temper—'you'd have seen that long ago. I did.'

'Well, sister, you needn't bite my nose off, if you did.'

'Just as well I shouldn't,' replied the snappish one; 'it's short enough already.'

Poor Miss Priscilla was in an agony lest the Doctor should have overheard this little rebuke; but she could not help looking up from her plate now and again and thinking to herself: 'Dear me! where *could* my eyes have been? He is certainly wonderfully handsome.' And then she blushed for shame at her thoughts.

Strangely enough, the very same idea was passing through the fair Miss Emerson's mind. It is never wise to speculate on the thoughts of ladies, for they are such incomprehensible creatures, that it is quite impossible to guess in what groove their ideas may be running. The young lady, with a most demure and saintly look on her face, has just finished sewing up the sleeves of her brother's friend's smoking-jacket, or has probably carefully deposited a sharp-pointed pebble in the young man's slipper, and is now dreaming of more mischief. It is as impossible to guess what the feminine cogitations are as it is to catch a butterfly with a railway engine. Miss Emerson, therefore, though, to all seeming, intent on roast fowl, was saying to herself: 'Now, that is the sort of man I should like to marry, if I ever do commit myself so far. So tall and well built; such an open, honest countenance; and oh! what lovely eyes!'

Dear me! what had come to all the ladies? All the men were aware that the Doctor had never been singled out in this fashion before. But the climax was reached when Mrs Parson, who had usually spoken of our hero as a member of 'one of those horrid German universities where they do nothing but smoke and guzzle beer from morning to night!'—when she actually, with a smile on her countenance, to which it had been a stranger for many a long day, said in dulcet tones as the party rose from the table: 'My dear Doctor, *would* you lend me your arm for a little stroll on the bank? I should so like to ask you your opinion on some of these dear delightful antiquities we see daily.'

Every one stared, the Parson most of all. The Masher turned aside to hide a grin; and the luckless and bewildered young man addressed answered hurriedly: 'With much pleasure, madam.' And the two departed, leaving the Parson staring in vacant amaze after his wife.

The other ladies fluttered into their cabins with, doubtless, various sensations in their minds; and fat, short, ugly Mr Cotton muttered to the Masher: 'Anged if *he* see anythin' so wonderful in that chap! A long-legged, German lout like

that! Wat's come over all these women-folk hof a sudden—hey?'

But the Masher was watching the Parson's face, on which were legibly imprinted virtuous horror, amazement, and indignation at the extraordinary behaviour of the wife of his bosom.

Mr Cotton retired into the cabin which he jointly occupied with the Doctor, dismissed the subject from his mind, and scanned the money article of the latest 'Times.' The Masher went on deck for a smoke; and the Parson was left, staring round the cabin in vacant bewilderment.

'To describe what that unfortunate Von Eberstein went through during his conferences with Mrs Parson,' said Colonel Merritt to me when relating this truly veracious story, 'is impossible. He tried to tell me; but what with his wrath and genuine astonishment at her conduct, and the roars of laughter with which I received his confidence, he couldn't explain himself. It was the richest joke I ever heard!'

When the Professor came on board again, the Parson, who from the deck had watched their approach in horrified silence as he saw Mrs Parson hanging affectionately on the Professor's arm, and looking up tenderly into his eyes—the Parson stepped forward, bestowed a haughty scowl on the unfortunate young man, and, addressing his wife, said: 'My dear, please come down-stairs; I wish to speak to you.' She waved a farewell to her late escort and vanished, leaving poor Von Eberstein rooted to the deck.

'Now, my friend,' said he, turning to the Masher, who was simply roaring with laughter, 'will you kindly tell me what is the meaning of all this, if you can?'

'If I can!' responded the Ornament. 'Why, my dear fellow, she's gone mashed on you! Why, I don't know; but it seems to me, from what I saw at breakfast, that *all* the ladies are in the same box. Ask yourself: I don't know why! And he wiped his eyes, having for once enjoyed a good laugh.

The Professor stood silent for a few moments; then he strolled forward, filled and lit his pipe, and began anew to examine his trophy, which he carried in his waistcoat pocket.

Meanwhile, there was gnashing of teeth in the Parson's cabin. Let us draw a veil over it, for charity's sake.

Dr von Eberstein had not been seated in the bows of the boat for more than ten minutes, when a soft step made him look up. There stood Miss Priscilla Jenkins, with a most maidenly smirk on her faded lips. 'Dr Eberstein,' she said in a lackadaisical voice, 'do you know I do really feel so ill; I wonder what is the matter with me? It is a kind of faintness. I should be so obliged if you would prescribe for me.'

'By all means, Miss Jenkins,' replied the kind-hearted and unsuspecting Doctor, taking her wrist in his. As he did so, he happened to look up, and he espied the Masher, watching him with a broad grin and shaking his finger at him. He dropped the wrist like a hot potato. 'I think if you go and lie down for a while the feeling you complain of may pass off. I will see you again at dinner.'

'Oh, thank you so much!' replied the guile-

less maiden, and she tripped away, leaving Von Eberstein in a cold perspiration of mingled fright and indignation.

'What—what is the meaning of all this?' he exclaimed. At this moment the head of Miss Hester Jenkins appeared at the companion. She glanced round, and then began to approach him. 'This is too much!' exclaimed the unhappy man, who sprang up and hastened towards the plank which led ashore, meaning to seek safety in flight. To effect this, however, he had to pass the lady, which he was doing with a bow, when she stopped him:

'Oh, Dr von Eberstein, I wished to ask you'—

'Another time, my dear madam; I am really in haste. I find I shall miss the chance of seeing a most interesting antiquity if I do not hurry.'

'But just a moment'—

'Positively, I shall be too late if I wait. An revoir, madam;' and he sprang ashore and hurried off. As he did so, he turned, and saw a face pressed against one of the cabin windows, evidently watching him. It was Miss Emerson's!

Miss Jenkins looked after him, feeling inclined to be angry, but presently her features relaxed. 'It is impossible to be angry with such eyes,' she murmured; and she retired to her cabin.

When the Professor returned that evening, he found himself, to his great annoyance, overwhelmed with the same embarrassing attentions, and he didn't like it. But he didn't at all mind when he looked up from his plate and saw Miss Emerson's pretty brown eyes bent upon him with an unmistakable expression of interest lurking in them, and lowered in confusion when they met his glance of admiration. That was quite another thing, and the sensation was decidedly pleasant.

They were now on their homeward journey, and would disembark the following day. The Professor was glad of it. He had become sick and weary of the gross and fulsome adulation the ladies of the party seemed inclined to bestow on him. He had devoted himself assiduously to Miss Emerson, at first to escape from the other women, but afterwards with a genuine feeling of respect and admiration, which had quickly ripened into love. And, on her part, Miss Emerson seemed inclined to reciprocate the sentiment. On this last evening, when they had gone to dress for dinner, Von Eberstein had abstractedly hung up his waistcoat without taking out his precious box. As he left the cabin, Mr Cotton hurried in to make his toilet. He had often seen the Professor take something out of his waistcoat pocket and pore over it, and with the curiosity of a little mind, had longed to know what it was. But though he had often examined the pocket, he had found nothing. There hung the identical waistcoat.

'It's last night,' said he; 'blowed hif I don't hexamine it hagain.' He did—and found the box! Hastily he opened it. 'Nothin' but one o' them cussed stinkin' beetles!' said he, in disgust. 'Wonder how a feller can carry such things about with 'im!' But here he heard the dinner coming. In his haste, he shoved the box into his own pocket and ran out to take his place.

That night, to the astonishment of the men, and also the delight of the Doctor, who was thereby freed from the usual attentions, the three elder ladies made a deliberate set at Mr Cotton. They complimented him on his improved looks; they teased him gently; they exercised all their fascinations upon the delighted man, who pulled up his collar, shot his cuffs, and literally bathed himself in feminine smiles. The Parson, who had given up his wife in despair, and was congratulating himself that the trip was just over, and she would come to her senses when 'that German fellow' was gone, was thunder-struck at this new movement of hers, and could only stare round the table, dumb and open-mouthed. 'The depravity of *her* flirting—she! a rector's wife! And at her age! Oh, pooh! it's impossible!' But it wasn't! There she was, before his face, making eyes at this low, underbred little man—ugly too! and, wonder of wonders, the Misses Jenkins following suit.

He had not a syllable to say for himself. The others all enjoyed themselves in their own way. The Professor made desperate love to Miss Emerson, who seemed to like it; the Masher surveyed the scene from the profundity of his shirt-collar, and chuckled delightedly at the changes which, dolphin-like, passed over the Parson's face; and the three ladies plied the enraptured Mr Cotton with compliments and flowery phrases, which so delighted him that he misplaced and dropped more aspirates than ever. And over all, the Reverend brooded like a thunder-cloud, gloomy and threatening.

And thus passed their last evening on board.

TWO DAYS IN CAPE CORSE.

THE innkeeper of Corte had called me at four A.M. that I might catch the morning train for Bastia. He was a Florentine, inordinately proud of the names in his visitors' book, and with the meanest cuisine in the world; and he had in vain tried to argue me into an ascent of Monte Rotondo, which would entail my return to his hotel for another day or two. But I was in no humour for Monte Rotondo. To begin with, it was the month of May; and the season was late. There was a terrible amount of snow on the mountain. One knew this by induction; for the lower peaks, not much more than a third as high as Monte Rotondo, still glistened with their white mantles.

There were other reasons why I turned my back on Monte Rotondo and proposed to hurry to Bastia. Perhaps not the least of them was the desire to leave as quickly as possible an island which, from all accounts, was still, in the year 1890, nearly as full of bandits as boar. It seemed incredible; yet there can be no doubt that Corsica was and is retrograding in certain respects. And although the Corsican bandit does not lay himself out for the capture of travelling foreigners, who could say how soon he might find the temptation irresistible? The man who shoots one human being after another in vendetta with as little repugnance as you or I would shoot a partridge, may be expected after a time to become callous about other of the Commandments. And I for one felt unambitious of such adventures as might be the lot of the Englishman in bonds to bandits.

among the bleak mountain-tops of the green isle of Corsica.

Though too early in the year for the high peaks, it was by no means too early for that interesting yet very little visited promontory to the north of Corsica which protrudes itself from the main island like the spike of a sword-fish. Moreover, the Cape Corsicans, as the inhabitants of this headland are called, have a reputation for thrift and sobriety which makes them despised by their more lazy and happy-go-lucky brethren of the interior. The inference was that they retained less of that taste for bloodshed which certainly characterises the average Corsican now, as in past times. It seemed unlikely, therefore, that I should here be thought worth seizing and holding for a ransom which my friends at home might think a preposterously high estimate of the value of my life.

The weather had been dull to the last degree during the previous week. Storm after storm from the south-west—the fiercest quarter for Corsica—had broken upon the land, and tumbled the waves of the Mediterranean into Ajaccio's lovely bay so as to make even the Ajacciots a little impatient and disposed to marvel. It was equally wild in Corte. The high white and black houses of this quaint old fortress-town were all blotched with damp and mould. The rivers Restonica and Tavignano, which meet under its castle rock, rushed surgingly towards their goal on the eastern shore. And only now and again, at sunset and sunrise, was there any break in the black clouds over the mountains which in the west and south frame Pasquale Paoli's town so engagingly.

Under these conditions of the atmosphere, I travelled towards Bastia on a chilly May morning, hoping for better things, upon the strength of a divinely rosy flush which had glowed upon Rotondo's snow at the hour of our departure. For companions I had an old gentleman with a gun, and a young hearty priest with thick curly hair and an ingenuous expression. The priest talked without ceasing; and the old gentleman fingered his gun and uttered the laconic phrases, 'Eh gia! Ah! Ebbene! Sacro Dio!' one after the other; as much, it appeared, in extreme weariness of his companion's loquacity as for the sake of any encouragement it might give him to continue to talk. Anon, however, at a wayside station the priest departed, and, to the amazement of my Protestant eyes, was straightway received into the arms of two stout countrywomen who awaited him on the platform. They took him in their arms one after the other, his bag and his bundle, his umbrella, rosary, and prayer-book, and embraced him, with many a sounding salute upon the cheek, until, with some difficulty and haste, he fought himself free of them, and stood at arm's-length, blushing like a poppy. I daresay they were his mother and an aunt or foster-mother.

At Bastia the sky was blue, and the sun shone gaily upon the multitude of white tombs which, after the Corsican fashion, dot the hill-sides like bijou country residences. It appeared that the bad weather was left behind. And so, indisposed to lose time, straightway I went from the railway to the *Hôtel de France*, and thence, having breakfasted with appetite upon the excellent trout of

the island and the fair wine, I walked with my knapsack to the diligence office for the Cape Corse townlets, and in a trice had engaged the *coupe*. In less than an hour after entering the old capital of the island, I was being eddied along through the dust of the high-road in the worst, most dilapidated, and most tedious of public conveyances in which it had yet been my misfortune to travel. A large widow with an asthma sat by my side for a few minutes. She was a genial conversational soul, and we were soon upon such an intimacy that I received an invitation to visit her upon my return to Bastia, and was informed of the amount of the savings of her son, who chanced to be in the postal service of the Argentine Republic at Buenos Ayres. When the widow went, I was alone in the lumbering car for hours, with all the dust of the highway for company.

The journey by diligence began at 10.30 A.M. and lasted until 8 P.M. Morsiglia was to be my resting-place; and so I did not leave the diligence until Morsiglia was reached. In the meantime, I had learned the physiognomy of Cape Corse by heart, save that of the mountains, which pervaded it in the middle like a vertebra. The road is cut out of the rocky cliffs of the coast-line, and white villages nestling by the calm blue sea were passed one after another. Now and again, however, the prospects were of a broader kind. We came to spacious glens and valleys which broke upon the shore from the inland mountains. Through the midst of the cornfields and vineyards, olive woods and chestnut forests of these lateral rifts, attractive brooks of fresh water purled their way to the Mediterranean.

Some very happy days may be spent with the rod and gun in Corsica; and none will be remembered more brightly than those devoted to Cape Corse. The entire promontory is hardly twenty miles long by an average breadth of six or seven miles. Yet it has scenery and attractions of many kinds within its compass: mountains five thousand feet high; townlets and villages on the hill-sides and in the valleys; fruit famous for its excellence; wine unmatched elsewhere in Corsica; wild-boar and partridge among its thick perfumed herby scrub; fish in its pellucid streams, and the sea, which is never far away; and the most vivacious of Corsica's cities at its point of juncture with the body of the island.

We rested awhile at the Marina of the town of Luri—five miles up a valley and built on the mountain sides—and the Marina of Rogliano. Then we climbed with terrible tardiness into the mountains to reach Rogliano itself, the chief town of the cape. It is gloriously situated at the head of an amphitheatre of mountains, with a deep valley beneath it opening towards the sea, and teeming with woods and gardens. The town was in gala dress: triumphal arches and mottoes of welcome everywhere; and the people themselves in their sleekest black, and the damsels in silk. The new Prefect of Corsica had in the course of his tour of the island arrived at Rogliano and been received by the notables and feasted. You would think that people living in the midst of such beauty must of necessity have beautiful natures—be generous, gentle, and unselfish. It is not quite so, however; for Rogliano furnishes

its due and more of the rogues charged with murder and other heinous crimes at the assizes of Bastia.

From Rogliano, the drive was by one rounded upland hill-side after another towards the west coast of the cape. We passed the lighthouse of the extremity to the right. The road made prodigious detours with the curves of the deeply-dimpled slopes. It was a treeless region. The shrubs, however, were thick everywhere; and sweet was the perfume of them as the evening dew distilled their essences.

Thus we ambled by Ersu, the northernmost village, which we saw hundreds of feet beneath us; and Centuri, to which we descended for the convenience of a distinguished native and his sister, who were gracious enough to invite me into their house, and make mention of free accommodation for the night. But to this civil offer I was proof, though it was tendered in all sincerity; and so, amid a profusion of bows and good wishes—the latter from the lady, I rejoice to say, and bestowed in the most cordial manner—I resumed my seat, and we clambered back to the high-road for the last stage of the day.

It was full time the journey was over. The sun, fiery as a tomato, had gone below the horizon line of the sea. The headlands of the coast, north and south, were paling fast. With remarkable suddenness, the air had chilled, and taken a clammy turn that was not very agreeable. I was dead-tired, what with the extraordinary length of my day—beginning as it did at sunrise—the dire jolts of the last ten hours, the aching of my battered bones, and the comparative lightness of my stomach. And so I rejoiced when in the uncertain gloaming the conductor pointed to some houses in front, with a brace of crenellated citadels of the time of Genoa in their midst, and introduced me to the outskirts of Morsiglia. It was well he gave me this information when he did. For no sooner had we come to a heavy stand-still in front of the post-office in the little market-place, than a score or two of the populace beset the poor man with demands for this thing and that, which he had been bidden to buy or get for them in Bastia or *en route*. It was a scene to turn the head of a mathematician. Some blamed him roundly for neglect; others rated him for misinterpretation of their demands. And there was such a riotous chatter from the more contented ones, who examined their parcels before the public eye and the stars, that none would have heeded me unless I had set myself explicitly to outshout them all. I smoked another cigarette, and watched them all with interest, until the storm had subsided. Only then did I request directions to the wayside inn of a humble kind which I had been told might be found in Morsiglia.

My bill for bed and board in this little village 'at the back of the world' was two francs and a half. It may be imagined, therefore, that it receives few visitors. Indeed, as a matter of fact it has no inn. The little boy who was bidden to guide me to the house led me through the village and out on to the hill-side until we came to a single white dwelling all shuttered and barred for the night. This was the residence of the road inspector of the district, who, it appeared, played the part of hotel-keeper. On this occasion,

however, he and his wife were both abed; and it was only after considerable parleying that I induced their son to receive me. He gave me a supper of eggs and cheese and indifferent wine, and showed me to a guest-room that would not have been amiss in the *Hotel Metropole*.

The next day opened magnificently, with a cloudless sky and a glare on the sea which proclaimed the sun. The road inspector was up and curious to see his guest. So cordial was he when I professed myself well content with the poverty of his welcome, that he volunteered to be my guide for a journey afoot across the mountains back to Luri, whence I could take the return diligence to Bastia. It was a *festa* day, and thus he was at liberty to take his pleasure. 'Moreover,' he observed, with kindly emphasis, 'understand that I do not do it for money. I go with you as a friend.'

A cup of coffee and a raw egg were princely nutriment upon which to begin one of the most delightful walks I have ever made. It was a joy to breathe the balmy air, a mixture of the scent of many an herb, orange blossoms, the tang of the salt sea, and the morning freshness. We strode along the high-road, therefore, with happiness exuding at every pore, my friend averring that the exercise was pure pleasure to him. We soon left Morsiglia behind; it was lost at the bend of the first headland. But there was compensation in the glorious panorama of Corsica's central peaks, the snow of which seemed to tread the blue of the heavens. The coast-line of the north was also visible right along to Calvi, the ancient little town which boldly claims Columbus for a son. The pale gray of the various capes edged the southern sea to the horizon line.

We kept to the high-road for a few miles, and then, with the Tower of Seneca in front of us, struck steeply upon the herby hills. The Tower of Seneca is a stout ruin upon a mountain top, where tradition says Nero's tutor passed his years of exile in Corsica. It is in this part of the Cape that the sportsman may hope to have a fair day's shooting. The brushwood is, however, so dense that there is small temptation for any but the most robust of hunters to continue long on the track of the Cape Corsican boar. As for the horses, which one may hire here for two or three francs a day, they would be perfectly useless anywhere except on the high-roads and byways.

One wonders to see how these hills of the cape are left wholly to Nature. It is due partly to the native indolence of the Corsicans, who despise manual labour, and partly to the comparatively sparse population. 'Hands are lacking,' said my friend the road inspector, with an instructive heave of the shoulder. Besides, the soil is very thin, and the substratum of limestone, hornblende, and granite is not very attractive to the agriculturist. Thus the outer hill-slopes of the Cape are generally destitute of dwellings and gardens, whereas the valleys and defiles are well peopled.

From the watershed at the base of Seneca's Tower we looked at length again upon the valley of Luri, which is reckoned the most enchanting spot of the Cape. The day before, I had seen it from its base on the eastern side. Now I was at its summit in the west; and the white houses of its different hamlets—all called Luri—set in the midst of chestnut woods in their fairest greenery,

were at my feet. The blackbirds and linnets in the trees were in vigorous song as we descended at a smart pace through these beautiful little woods. Our pace, indeed, was such that the pangs of thirst began to be troublesome, in spite, too, of the shade of the chestnuts. But my guide would not allow me to have recourse to the brooks which fell from high springs on both sides of us. 'Water,' he said sagely, 'is a poor drink, and not very wholesome.' Moreover, I was to taste the Muscat of Luri, a wine of repute.

Down, therefore, to the first convenient house, entering it over the dungheap contiguous to the front door. It was a poverty-stricken hovel, though so white and tolerably assuming outside. A pitcher and a chair were almost the only articles of furniture in its reception room, the ceiling of which was black with smoke, and the floor populous with fleas. But the Muscat was speedily brought forth. It had been pressed by the naked feet of the tawny woman who offered it to us, and was worth but a penny or so the litre. I have drunk better wine, but none that seemed more delicious. The good dispenser of it was mightily pleased it was appreciated; and it was only after much argument that she could be persuaded to take half a franc as an acknowledgment of its excellence. They are not mercenary in Cape Corse; and as often as not a money offer is rejected—with some spirit.

Luri is quite a considerable village, with two hotels, some swelling municipal buildings, and rather a large church, containing nothing worth seeing. The citizens were pacing solemnly up and down their streets under the faded arches with which they in their turn had greeted the Prefect; and attired in their festival clothes. They flung us civil inquiries as we passed them on our way down the valley, with orange groves and vineyards on both sides of the road. This is especially a famous region for citrons, the trees of which were as odorous as the oranges.

It was yet only eleven o'clock when we arrived at the Marina of Luri, and the rendezvous for the Bastia diligences. Our walk of about fourteen miles had been as brisk as it was lovely. Certainly, it will not be easy to forget.

Let me, in conclusion, give my readers the bill of fare of a meal at a franc and a half which awaited us at the little inn of the Marina. It will sufficiently show that Cape Corse is unsophisticated, and quite a land for the tourist who is out at elbows. There was wine *ad libitum*, of course. The meal began with *hors-d'œuvre* of Corsican sausage, radishes, and olives. Soup à la bouillabaisse followed. Lamb cutlets, a Corsican stew of beef, potatoes, and artichokes, cheese, pastry, and coffee, with uncooked broad beans for dessert, were the concluding stages of an eccentric but excellent feast. Nor was the company less excellent. My guide and I sat with various peasants of the district, who were as polite as courtiers; and a certain gentleman and lady, Cape Corsican to the bone; and we were all waited upon by a handsome maid, who was as civil with her smiles as were my companions in speech.

An hour later I gave my friend the road inspector a strong shake of the hand and mounted by the driver of the diligence. The worthy man waved his hat to me until I was tired of contort-

ing myself to look back at him. He had consented to accept a trio of francs, after all; but I verily believe it was rather to satisfy me than for the good of his own pocket.

Cape Corse is a district to revisit. I venture to recommend it to the traveller in Corsica. Hurried as was my own view of it, it sufficed to put me on the best of terms with the land and its people.

PROVIDENCE COTTAGE.

AN EPISODE.

By G. B. BURGIN.

"PROVIDENCE Cottage," Mrs Pringle, ma'am, it shall be,' said Captain Sol Buddle firmly, as he passed his huge cup for another cup of tea, and wiped his forehead with a red bandana handkerchief.

'Well, Captain,' said Mrs Pringle, in tones of amiable acquiescence, 'you being a scholar, and having book-learning moreover, it isn't for me to gainsay you.'

'Mrs Pringle, ma'am,' said the Captain, emphatically rapping his spectacle case on the table, 'your sentiments do you honour. When a man comes to my time of life'—

Mrs Pringle made a little deprecatory movement of her pretty fat hand.

The Captain smiled, well pleased. 'Ah, Mrs Pringle, ma'am, that's the poetry oozing out of you; you're chockfull of it. I say when a man comes to my time of life'—

'Only forty-five, Captain Buddle,' softly suggested Mrs Pringle.

The Captain bowed courteously. 'Not being used to the society of amiable ladies like yourself, Mrs Pringle, I don't quite know how to undecieve you as to my years.'

He paused, a piece of buttered toast in his hand, and looked round Mrs Pringle's cosy sitting-room, warm with the heat of a glowing sea-coal fire. Also, his thoughts went back to the society of various nautical ladies he had known whose manners lacked the repose which distinguished Mrs Pringle's.

Mrs Pringle also paused, teapot in hand, to cast a pensive glance at the gallant sailor opposite.

Outside, tumultuous waves beat noisily against the shingly shore, as if insisting that Captain Sol Buddle should be delivered up to them; inside, the only sound which broke the stillness was a pensive mew from Mrs Pringle's Persian cat. The Captain paused again, took up the cat, and thoughtfully poured out some milk for it. 'My cat on board the "Morning Star" would never take his milk without a spoonful of grog in it,' he said reminiscently; 'but he tried to do too much for his strength: he was always ambitious, that cat was—too ambitious. Laid himself out to eat up all the ship's cockroaches, though he knew they disagreed with him; and there was a funeral soon after—his funeral. He took a lot of cockroaches with him, too—as many as he could hold, poor chap.' Captain Buddle heaved a sigh to the memory of his departed favourite. 'As to my years,' he resumed, 'they'—

The quiet Mrs Pringle, who was not much given to interruptions, did a most unusual thing—she interrupted the Captain again—for the

third time. 'A man is as young as he looks,' she said. 'And you, Captain Buddle, don't look a day over forty-five.'

The Captain again bowed with nautical grace. 'Seeing you've set your mind on it, Mrs Pringle, we'll make it so; though, if any questions are asked, the facts will go against it.'

'No one will be so impertinent,' said Mrs Pringle, as she looked pensively down at her pretty slipper.

The Captain passed his cup for more tea, a beverage to which he had lately taken a great fancy: its novelty appealed to him most strongly. In his seafaring days at this hour—like the departed cat—he had generally partaken of a soothing beverage with rum in it. But the widow had gradually weaned the Captain from such an unlady-like beverage as rum in the daytime, and he found ever fresh delight in tea—tea with cream in it—tea by the bucket—tea containing four lumps of sugar to each supply. At ten o'clock every night, however, the widow's fair hands brewed her lodger what he was facetiously wont to call 'a stiff nor'-wester.' Then, the Captain sat thoughtfully by the fire, living his voyages over again, and full of simple, reverent thankfulness that he had been spared to drift into such a pleasant haven of peace.

Mrs Pringle continued to knit, as the cat drowsily purred on the Captain's knee. The Captain put down his cup and took up the plan of a very snug, two-storeyed cottage, with a veranda running all round it. "Providence Cottage," it shall be, Mrs Pringle; and he looked about for a pipe spill.

Mrs Pringle handed him one with something of a sigh.

'For more than six months,' said the Captain, meditatively drawing a long breath, and carefully using his little finger for a tobacco-stopper—'for more than six months I've been laid up in port, so to speak, and yet in sight and smell of the sea.'

'Yes, you can certainly smell it,' said Mrs Pringle dubiously. 'And when the fishing-boats come in, it's a little bit—eh—strong.'

'Well,' said the Captain admiringly, 'a trifle, maybe, for a delicate lady's nose like yours, Mrs Pringle; but there's not an unpleasant flavour about it to a man who's spent his life in communion, so to speak, with such smells. Why, every port has a different smell, and you get to know the lay of the land by it long before you drop anchor.'

'Aren't you tired of the sight of the sea?' somewhat inconsequently asked Mrs Pringle, again filling the Captain's cup, which was blue and white, with 'A Present from Ventnor' on it in bold, clear characters of green. Mrs Pringle lived about a mile beyond Ventnor in a snug little cottage, whose garden ran down to the sea.

'No, ma'am, I ain't,' returned the Captain meditatively. 'Cause why, Mrs Pringle? The sea gets into a man's blood and heart and brain. When he goes down to the sea in ships, likewise fishing-smacks, it's because he's drawn to it, so to speak. He can't help it. The wonders of the deep are always wonders to him, though he's seen them all his days; the harvest of the sea—its dead men's bones, its coral caves, where, saving your presence, those fish-tailed hussies, the mer-

maids, sit waiting for you with deceitful murmurings and delusive songs—is afore him ever in the night-watches; every wind that blows, every whale that spouts, is known to him almost as well as its Creator.'

Mrs Pringle shuddered. 'It's a cruel, treacherous thing,' she said—'a cruel, treacherous thing. I sometimes wake at nights and draw the clothes over my head to shut out the noise. It makes me shudder, and yet I can't leave it.'

'You're right, Mrs Pringle,' said the Captain, drawing his chair a little closer to her—'you're right. It is a cruel, treacherous thing, with its changing winds and hungry, foaming waves, its never-resting, never-ending ebb and flow, its little baby ripples and soft surface a-shining in the sun. And then, when you slide down into it just to feel its soft touch, why, as like as not,' continued the Captain, rather ashamed of his oratorical flight—'why, as like as not, there's a shark waiting to grab and drag you down to Davy Jones's locker.'

Mrs Pringle looked frightened, so the Captain hastened to reassure her. 'It's a wonderful place is the sea, Mrs Pringle, such a lot of spare room in it for rubbish. I should like to take two or three of these contractors who've sent in estimates for Providence Cottage and dump 'em down into Port Royal harbour, so that Port Royal Tom could just open his jaws and contract for them. One would think I was going to build a palace instead of a tidy little six-roomed cottage.'

'Ah, but the masterful way in which you rule and direct them, Captain Buddle!' said Mrs Pringle admiringly. 'You've a natural gift for the ruling of men.'

'Maybe,' said the Captain pleasantly; 'but that's a different thing from the ruling of women, Mrs Pringle. You can't clinch any little difference of opinion with a handspike when you're arguing with lovely woman. You've got to keep your hand on the helm all the time and not let her know it.'

'Yes,' rejoined Mrs Pringle thoughtfully; 'women like a strong, masterful hand that'll guide them; but they won't be driven.'

The Captain shifted himself in his chair. Suddenly it dawned upon him that the matter might be one capable of personal interpretation. He had never tried his hand in that direction. It seemed to him that the howling wind outside, as it blew among the unfinished rafters of Providence Cottage, was jeering at him for his lack of skill in the direction of the fair sex. He stirred his tea and took another lump of sugar.

And the widow, too, thought of many things in her quiet, gentle way as she sat by her side of the fire. Captain Buddle, with his wonderful flow of language and quaint descriptive power, had been a great source of comfort to the amiable Mrs Pringle. And now in a couple of months Providence Cottage would be finished and the Captain cease to remain her lodger. How kind he had been when that 'land-shark' of a coal-man tried to cheat her out of a sack of coals! The Captain, albeit a man of peace, had knocked the fraudulent coal-man into the middle of the cellar, and refused to allow him to depart until he put his head through the circular opening and humbly apologised. It was something to have

a great, strong, gentle—the Captain was always wonderfully gentle to her—sailor about the premises. Ah, well, she would take her nephew Jack and his pretty bride, Polly Humphreys, to live with her until they had saved enough money to buy a house—no thrifty fisherman at Ventnor ever married before he had bought a house—and try to forget the Captain's pleasant ways. Then she remembered that Jack was a little uncertain in his temper, and that the Captain was, except when unjustifiably roused by fraudulent coal-men, as mild as a lamb.

Suddenly, Captain Buddle rose from his chair and crossed over to Mrs Pringle's side of the room. 'Mrs Pringle, ma'am,' he said, and his flow of language seemed to have returned to him—'Mrs Pringle, ma'am, what would you think of a man who was safe in port if he ventured out to sea again in a new craft—a craft that might be lopsided and cranky, with shifting ballast, given likewise to shipping bilge-water—there was a touch of real pathos in his voice as he drew this touching picture—'and maybe that wouldn't answer her helm?—what would you think of such a man if he was to leave his snug bunk in port and go drifting up and down a-steerin' all over the points of the compass generally?'

'I should think of him whatever you thought of him, Captain Buddle,' said Mrs Pringle. 'It is not for me to set my opinion against that of a sea-faring gentleman like yourself. But if the man you speak of is the man I take him to be, then—'

'Then what, Mrs Pringle, ma'am?' eagerly inquired the Captain.

'He—he would stop in his bunk in port, as you nautical gentlemen say,' returned Mrs Pringle.

The Captain's face glowed with excitement. He took up the plans of Providence Cottage to cast them in the fire. Mrs Pringle gently stayed his hand. 'What are you doing?' she asked.

'Mrs Pringle, ma'am, I'm going to commit these plans to the flames,' said the Captain, 'unless you'll let me give 'em to Jack and Polly.'

'W-what?'

'Yes, Mrs Pringle, ma'am, I am that lubber,' said the Captain, with repressed excitement. 'Why should I go building a house like Providence Cottage, when my Providence is here! This is my port; and if so be you'll allow me to cast anchor and stay here?—'

'In command?' queried Mrs Pringle, scarce knowing what she said.

The Captain took her hand. 'No, Mrs Pringle; but as first-officer, with you in command, and Prudence and the cat to swab decks.'

'Ye-es,' said Mrs Pringle; and the Captain, forgetting the cat, kissed her.

The cat walked out of the room, her tail stiff with indignation.

Outside, the wind howled dismally among the brickwork of the partially completed Providence Cottage. Ten o'clock struck as the widow brought out her family Bible, and Prudence Pemberton, the maid, sat coyly down on the edge of a chair just inside the parlour door.

The Captain opened the Bible reverently. 'Now, we'll have our sailing orders for to-morrow,' he said.

Mrs Pringle laid aside her knitting, looked at

the Captain with tearful eyes, and placed his spectacles on the open Bible, thus tacitly taking command of that goodly mariner, Captain Sol Buddle, who put on the spectacles and somewhat laboriously began to read.

A NEW PHASE OF THE PEARL-SHELL INDUSTRY.

To Mr Saville-Kent, a Queensland Commissioner of Fisheries, is due the credit of a discovery which may revolutionise the Pearl-shell Industry in the Southern Seas. That official has been making experiments with the pearl-oyster for some years, and has lately proved to his own satisfaction and that of his Government, that the valuable mother-of-pearl bivalve can be transplanted and cultivated.

To cultivate the pearl-shell has been the desire of centuries. The oyster has been carried from lagoon to lagoon, from island to island; but though land and water were as good as in its original abode, it perished when transported. Long before white men tried it, the island natives and the aborigines of the Australian mainland worked at the problem. Not only was the fish good to eat and the pearl a lustrous ornament, but out of the shell they made knives and goblets and countless objects of utility and beauty; and consequently its propagation was everywhere desired. It abounded in places difficult of access, in places dangerous of access, and in waters where enemies were numerous; while, where all was favourable, a live oyster was not seen in the memory of man. The intellect even of a barbarian stood puzzled at this. The islander who lived far from an oyster-bed rested his canoe on the bosom of his own waters and gazed into their shining depths. Gardens of flowers in bud and bloom seemed spread beneath him. Corals reddened and purpled and gleamed white, like snow. They were cleft and broken; here and there huddled in mounds; here and there looking like ruined temples and fallen palaces, up through whose gravelly floors rose tree-like columns with branches which the lazy ripples swayed. Fishes with golden gills and fins and silvery backs darted in and out. 'Why,' he would ask, 'must I always go to the far-off Tuamotus for the shining shell, instead of inducing it to make its home here?' And, to deepen the contrast, where shells abounded, there also sharks were found. Other creatures, too, inspiring terror or disgust were frequently encountered in the regions favoured by them.

Hence, since long before the advent of the white man, the natives outside the pearl districts have been labouring on the problem of transportation and cultivation. The earliest records of the South Seas tell that the islanders whom the white man consulted regarded cultivation as almost impossible. The savages pointed to bays and reefs which had been the scene of experiments, and went on paddling their canoes or flying like birds with outspread sails over the waters to distant haunts. As was the belief before civilised history opened, so it is to-day among the general body of the natives; and the solitary individual who now and again experiments anew is looked upon by his fellows with a

compassion which still proves their interest in the question.

White men made many attempts to translate the oysters to a fresh habitat, but with results which have hitherto made them firm supporters of the native opinion.

And yet there is nothing mysterious about Mr Saville-Kent's method of working. He established experimental pearl-shell nurseries at Thursday Island and at a landing-stage in Torres Strait, and has submitted to numberless tests his plans of deportation. The main difference between his mode of transit and that followed by other white men and aborigines is that the Commissioner's divers collect young shells for transportation, and keep them during the journey immersed in continually changed sea-water; whereas under the old practice it was thought sufficient to give them but one supply of water. The years devoted specifically to experimenting are but a small portion of the time the Commissioner has given to the study of the habits of the pearl-oyster. He has been an enthusiast on the subject, and his Government is now satisfied that by his method successful transportation is assured.

The natural result of this is that the foreshores of Northern Queensland have suddenly acquired a commercial value unthought of in the past. The Governor in Council, appreciating the new departure, at once framed a set of ordinances to regulate and control the anticipated traffic. Till the beginning of the current year, pearl-shell fishers were left very much to their own devices. They were mostly a lawless lot. The men of one station were in frequent feud with those of another. The principals strained every nerve to overreach one another, and no practice which succeeded was accounted nefarious. So little honesty was there in their conduct that the pearls had long ceased to be objects of legitimate industry; they had become objects of swindling or plunder. The divers stole them from the shells; the masters stole or violently pillaged them from the divers; and the purveyors of rum and brandy absorbed them from the last holders. The shells alone remained a staple industry. The new regulations contemplate changing all this. The foreshores will be mapped out into small leaseholds, with conditions of residence and improvements attached. The cultivation of the pearl-shell will be pursued as assiduously as its capture. Waters now barren will be stocked, and the only limitation to the area of cultivation will be climate. Raiding and exploitation will be ended, for oysters of certain sizes only will be allowed to be captured. As a general rule, the capture of any shell whose 'nacre,' or pearly lining, measures less than six inches in diameter will be illegal and its exposure for sale penalised. There are dwarf forms of shell which will be excepted from this; but the young ones of even these species will be protected from the indiscriminating beachcomber and his allies.

Mention was made of the theftuous disposition of many engaged in the traffic. There appears to be something in the pearl, as in the diamond, which allures from the path of honesty. The divers are mostly Papuans, Malays, or aboriginal Australians, and a high degree of virtue is not to be expected from them; but it can be safely stated

that the most upright among them will fall in the presence of the smallest pearl. It is true that many pearls get accidentally lost. In opening the shells, the divers let the pearls slip out with the water as often as they catch them. It is currently believed that at the bottom of every station there is a deposit which, when a way of working it is found, will give a fortune to the man who raises it. But, allowing for accidents, the return of pearls is far from what it should be in the estimate made of the season's work; there is abundance of shell of the right sort; but what has happened the enclosures? The only answer to this is that they are surreptitiously made away with. Many beachcombers prohibit their divers to open the shells. They perform the work with their own hands, and the precaution is a wise one. It only partially succeeds, however. The natives have sometimes an instinctive knowledge of a pearl-bearer, and if denied all chance of opening the shell, they will not detach the oyster at all. Mr Saville-Kent suggests in this connection that well-boats should be employed, into which the divers should throw the unopened oysters, and that at the close of the day's fishing, the master should tow his boat to the station and open the shells at his leisure. The suggestion will no doubt be adopted by the lessees; and provided the divers can be weaned from their old habits, the result should be satisfactory. The Australian pearl is already a matter of history. A fisherman on one of the beaches of West Australia picked up a pearl, which he sold for ten pounds, and which came afterwards to be valued at ten thousand pounds. About the middle of last year, a prize of similar value was drawn from the northern waters.

In any case, the Queensland experiment deserves appreciative recognition. If the pearl-oyster can be thus successfully transported and cultivated, numberless tropical bays and lagoons, now of little industrial value, may be planted with these fish and made fields of profitable enterprise.

ON WAIST-GIRDLES.

THE Girdle is an article of dress with a history that is not unimportant or uninteresting. It has in times past been much more highly esteemed than it is now; and was, in fact, among not a few peoples, worn by both males and females. This was so amongst the ancient Hebrews, as well as amongst the Greeks and Romans, who found it well nigh indispensable because of the flowing raiment they wore.

In Rome, a man's investiture of his girdle showed that he was intent on work of some nature. When he took it off and let his tunic fall, it was potent to all that business was over, and that he was free to speak to his friends at his and their leisure. Thus the girdle served a purpose—negative in its character, of course, but a purpose, nevertheless. Its sphere of usefulness did not end here. It was figurative of property. When a man or woman put off his or her girdle, it was a token of renunciation of some right or privilege. The widow of Philip I., Duke of Burgundy, for instance, renounced her right of succession by 'putting off her girdle on the Duke's tomb.' Per contra, the Princes of Ireland in taking the oath of fealty to King John laid

aside their girdles, their *skeans*, and their caps. 'In the ceremony of excommunication,' says a writer, 'the bishop cut or tore away from the culprit the girdle that was about him; and the newly-made husband in Rome took from his wife the maiden girdle of sheep's wool in which she was bound up to the day of her marriage.' Howell quotes as familiar a French proverb, *Il a quitté sa ceinture* (He has given up his girdle), which intimated as much as if he had become bankrupt, or had all his estate forfeited, it being the ancient law of France that when any man, upon some offence, had the penalty of confiscation inflicted upon him, 'he used before the tribunal to give up his girdle, implying thereby that the girdle held everything that belonged to man's estate, as his budget of money and writings, the keys of his house, with his sword, dagger, and gloves.' The fact that the girdle was used as a purse had much to do with its importance in general appreciation. We have an English proverb confirmatory of this appreciation. It said, 'Ungirt, unblest;' and that it was in very common use is clear from the frequency with which the phrase occurs in old out-of-the-way literature.

The girdle was used for other material or actual purposes besides that of a receptacle for money. At it were hung the thousand-and-one odds and ends needed and utilised in every-day affairs. The scrivener had his inkhorn and pen attached to it; the scholar, his book or books; the monk, his crucifix and rosary; the innkeeper, his tallies; and everybody, his knife. So many and so various were the articles attached to it that the flippant began to poke fun. In an old play there is mention of a merchant who had hanging at his girdle a pouch, a spectacle case, a 'punniard,' a pen and inkhorn, and 'a handkercher, with many other trinkets besides, which a merry companion seeing, said it was like a haberdasher's shop of small-wares.' In another early play a lady says to her maid: 'Give me my girdle, and see that all the furniture be at it; look, that cizers, pinceers, the penknife, the knife to close letters with, the bodkin, the ear-picker, and the scale, be in the case.' Girdles were in some respects like the chatelaines not long ago so much the rage amongst ladies; but they differed therefrom in being more useful, more comprehensive in regard both to sex and to articles worn, and when completely furnished more costly. It is partly for this last reason that we find girdles bequeathed as precious heirlooms and as valuable presents to keep the giver's memory green after death. They were not infrequently of great intrinsic value. One of King John's girdles was wrought with gold and adorned with gems; and that of the widow of Sir Thomas Hungerford, bequeathed in 1504 to the mother church of Worcester, was of green colour, harnessed with silver, and richly jewelled.

Not a few wealthy commoners were able to afford the luxury of gold-embellished belts, and were not superior to that pardonable vanity so long as no regulation prohibited them. Those who have studied our social history will not be surprised to learn that enactments were passed restraining them. Edward III. forbade any person under the degree of a knight from wearing girdles gilt or of silver, unless he should

happen to be an esquire of substance valued at more than two hundred pounds, when a reasonable embellishment was tolerated. Henry IV. confirmed this regulation; but it does not seem to have been stringently enforced, for Edward IV. was constrained to impose a penalty of forty pence upon the wives of servants and labourers who should have the impertinence to aspire to be as good as their masters' spouses.

Girdles were an object of superstition, more especially if they had belonged to female saints. Such girdles were popularly believed to possess a certain remarkable power—the power, namely, of protecting women from some of the more serious illnesses that are attendant or consequent upon childbirth. This superstition permeated through all classes of the sex. Queens credited the miraculous virtues of 'Our Lady's Girdle,' and paid large prices for the loan of one. The majority of these girdles were believed to have been the property during her lifetime of St Margaret, the gracious patroness of married women. Mostly every nunnery in England—to say nothing of France—possessed one. There is in an old Irish poem, with the charmingly euphonious title of *Oran eadar Ailte agus Mac-Romain air dhoibh fearg a ghabhail ri Fionn*, an allusion to the efficacy of an enchanted or sanctified girdle in this same direction; and we are further informed that 'sickness cannot affect those whom their girdle binds.' In Ossian there is mention made to much the same effect. It does not matter that the poems of Ossian as put before the world by Mr Macpherson are not genuine; one of the schoolmaster's commentators states that 'sanctified girdles till very lately were kept in many families in the north of Scotland. They were impressed with several mystical figures, and the ceremony of binding them about the woman's waist was accompanied with words and gestures which showed the custom to have come originally from the Druids.'

LOST YOUTH.

Sing, till the glad world wake again,
The sweet, glad world of long ago,
Where sunbeams slid athwart the rain,
And wild winds set the seas aglow;
Sing the old songs that held the ways
Enraptured in the vanished days.

Sing, so perchance the swans may glide
O'er their white shadows, as of yore,
And far along the brown hill-side
The purple heather glow once more;
Sing, for the heaven is dim and strange,
And all the earth hath suffered change.

Alas, no song hath now the art
From out the dead past to recall
The joy of ear and eye and heart
That made our lost world's coronal.
The sweetest song man ever sung
Hath not the power to make us young.

D. B.

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ON THE IRON ROAD.

IN all ages, men have pleased themselves by comparing the works of their hands with their Maker's handiwork. Thus, many a long analogy has been drawn between a steam-engine and a man; yet press the analogy between the two careers—a man's and an engine's—as closely as we may, there always remains the vital difference that in the thing of man's creation there resides no indwelling recuperative power to remedy injuries—in other words, there is no life. So in making a comparison between a railway journey and the journey of life, that is found to be but an imperfect analogy, except in this, that the journey once commenced, it must, barring accidents, roll on to its close.

But it is not with far-fetched, strained similitudes we are at present concerned; the road of life may be an Iron Road to most of us; we may fight, or disdain to fight, for the best places on it; we may yield precedence to age and weakness, or jostle it aside, according to our characters; we may lend a helping hand to the fallen, or turn our backs on them; but on one thing the student of human nature may always confidently rely—that on the iron road, the characteristics of men and women are displayed more unhesitatingly than in any other scene of life. Here, in a third-class compartment, the habitual insular reserve yields to the pressure of numbers, the warmth of contact, the irresistible expectation of sympathy from unknown sources. Who that is in the habit of travelling 'first' ever had his ears tickled by a new word, coined and passed current in his very presence? Yet in our beloved 'third,' this is by no means an uncommon experience. Very recently, we were gratified by hearing a 'woman of the people' thus wind up her description of the manner in which her son 'Bob' had been deluded away from the path of virtue. 'He'd be all right,' she concluded, 'only them other boys *'coyduckses* him; so his master sacks him, and sends he home.'

Bless her homely face! How we loved her

as she sat puckering her honest forehead, furrow over furrow, contemplating silently the problem of having the delinquent Bob at home, 'out of place;' and longed to tell her that, all the world over, there were scores of Bobs in the same predicament and from the same cause—namely, 'the *'coyducksing* of them other boys.'

Her interlocutrice was one of that numerous class to whom all lugubrious details are as meat and drink. Her face was of the aquiline type, long and bony, and her talk was of deaths and funerals. To her the world was not so much a stage, as an undertaker's establishment; nothing in her friends' lives became them like their leaving it. She was very particular in describing the end of one old gentleman whose fancy it was to be interred in a scarlet shroud, in which raiment he looked, she affirmed, what we should scarcely have anticipated, 'real elegant.'

We cannot deny that the third, like other classes, occasionally accommodates wayfarers to travel with whom, hour after hour, is not to tread precisely the primrose path of dalliance. However, as bad meats will not nourish the best constitution, neither will good meats digest on a satiated stomach; and the fact that a fellow-traveller is not to our liking may be due as much to our unseasoned palate as to his native idiosyncrasies. His nonsense does not happen to suit our nonsense—that is all, as Lamb said when his farce was hissed. For instance, it depends very much upon our mood whether we are irritated or amused by the slim, carefully-dressed gentleman who enters the compartment a model of propriety, and almost instantly sloughs the cocoon of outward self-restraint and stands revealed as an arch-fidget. First his overcoat must be removed, folded accurately, and deposited in the netting overhead; his hat follows, and a travelling cap is produced. Surely, never before did any head-dress require so many twitches from side to side as this cap. He seats himself only to jump up again immediately, in order to disinter a newspaper from the pocket of the garment he so carefully folded a minute ago. For

full five minutes he is busied pressing the creases out of his paper, every movement covertly followed by the fascinated eyes of his foreboding fellow-travellers. At last he subsides with the columns before his eyes, and his credulous companions heave a sigh of content in concert at his relapse into quietude. Quietude! Not he; he has unfurled his banner not to study its contents, but merely, as it seems, to crackle and flourish it in the faces of his outraged neighbours; and having reduced them to the very verge of expostulation, he proceeds to refold it with as much precision as if his existence depended on the accuracy with which corner meets corner; and this done, he sits upon it, and looks round him with an innocent Jack-Hornerish expression of goodness and self-complacency on his countenance.

To be fidgety in a theatre, a concert, or lecture-room, or when cruelly penned in a pew, is bad; but in these places public opinion is soon brought to bear in a wholesome manner on the offender. If the irascibility of his nerves is such that he cannot duly control himself, he can leave, and the sooner the better; but here, we who are shut up with him are not murderers, except perhaps in intention. We cannot band together to thrust this tarantula out of window; scowls are quite lost upon him; he has reckoned us up, and not for one nor for all will he put a padlock on his restless limbs and ever-wagging tongue. For all this while he has been darting questions, reproofs, demands, at his imperturbable mountain of a wife, who, by the happy law of contrast, has scarcely moved a finger or an eyelid since she entered the carriage with him. She is the lightning conductor round which the lambent flame of his ubiquitous restlessness plays harmlessly. Presently, a meal, that ought to have amused this spendthrift of his diversions for at least twenty minutes, is despatched in less than ten, and is succeeded by a raging thirst which he has no means of allaying. Long before we reach a station, he has risen and clutched the door handle: that he reaches the platform on his feet instead of his head, is due to his executing a staggering *pas seul*, so fantastic that even his phlegmatic wife sanctions our unanimous titter with a slow smile. Yet he has his good points; for a porter appears almost immediately bearing fruit and milk offerings for the lady, who absorbs them with a deliberate ruminating satisfaction that is highly edifying; and which lasts unimpaired during the remainder of their stay with us, and is visible on her countenance as she follows her husband slowly up the platform, he gesticulating like a semaphore to a distant and undiscerning cabman.

Not so irritating, if certainly not so amusing, is the portly gentleman, in shining black broadcloth, who deposits and retains between his feet a patent-leather valise, as portly, as shining, as black, and in as good condition as himself. Whatever else this traveller may be, he is quite at home. If he had chartered the whole compartment, and the rest of us were occupying our seats on his sufferance, he could not be more so. Wholly regardless of the crushed-up little widow facing him, he spreads his legs on either side of his pet portmanteau, solicitous of its safety, and quite unconscious that by the mere impact of

his massive shoulder he has pinned the gaunt lad beside him to the back of the carriage. Evidently, he is one of Jacl's guests, accustomed to eat butter from a lordly dish. Every fold of his balloon cheeks, every crease of his redoubled chins, every furrow of his fleshy forehead, tells of unchecked appetite, unopposed arrogance. His neighbours are no more to him than the chance flies that settle near it are to the black valise. A planet-man without apprehensiveness, and without curiosity.

He retained the Jovian calm of his demeanour unimpaired when a lady bustled hastily into the carriage, uttering the ominous words, 'I don't wish to be fussy; I hate a fuss; but is this the train for Z——?' The question was put tentatively and collectively. With the good-nature characteristic of third-class passengers, two or three volunteered to give her information. From these she selected a sad-eyed gentleman sitting opposite to her, who, by replying to some two or three and thirty interrogatories, eventually succeeded in convincing her that Z—— was a terminus, beyond which she could not conveniently be carried by the most maliciously conspiring of companies. Having arrived at this consoling conviction, she proceeded to rearrange her bags, baskets, and other feminine accoutrements; on which, a heavy, lumpish-looking lad who accompanied her, having made a sheepish attempt to assist her, was rewarded with a, 'Don't dash! Edwin; I'm far too tired for dashing!' Nevertheless, she, who could not endure Edwin's 'dash,' made, immediately we arrived at a station, a dart for the window, and having secured a porter, promptly put him through his facings in a series of questions almost identical with those wherewith she had plied her opposite neighbour. Just as the train was moving on, a newspaper lad thrust an illustrated 'daily' into the carriage window and yelled interrogatively, 'Funny Folks?' We were by no means surprised to hear the sad-eyed gentleman opposite murmur in response, 'Yes—very.'

Once, and once only, in the course of a long journey, was this irrepressible dame in any degree abashed. It was in this wise. It so happened that the tickets for Z—— are collected at X——, two stations earlier on the line than that famous terminus. Moreover, it chanced that on this occasion the ticket-collector had had his humour crossed by the boisterous behaviour of some college lads in an adjoining compartment. These, returning happy and glorious from some local cricket match, had been exercising their victorious lungs on the popular ditties of the day ever since they had come on board. And the collector's demand for their tickets—safely ensconced in the pocket of a master in a distant carriage—only met with redoubled shouts and some mild chaffing in reply. As he banged the door of their compartment and wrenched ours open, he snarled out, 'I know what they teaches at your college—they teaches Ignorance!'—a sally only received with a roar of applause from the lads. This sardonic official was consequently not in the humour to be questioned with impunity, and to our lady's suspicious query, 'This is not Z——?' he only repeated surlily, 'This is not Z——.'

'There is another station between here and Z——?' she continued hardly.

'There is another station between here and Z—', was stubbornly reiterated.

'And yet you take the tickets here?' she demanded.

'And yet we take the tickets here,' he echoed, with such bitter intensity of emphasis, that the poor lady sank back with actually something like a blush upon her cheek.

That travelling dissipates prejudices is an old saying; that it teaches us what books or pedants never can—namely, that useful science, knowledge of the world, is more certain; if it disciplines us into bearing our own grievances rather than trespass on the comfort or convenience of a—temporary—neighbour, it does us a greater service than merely carrying us where we wish to go.

In conclusion, we will briefly narrate a little incident that happened, years ago, upon the iron road, to show that not only may prejudices be dissipated in travelling, but that friendships may be founded under the most unlikely circumstances, and in spite of prejudices the most obnoxious. Some of our readers may remember the murder, in a first-class compartment, of the unfortunate Mr Briggs by the German Müller. A wave of tragic horror passed over all respectable travellers in or near London, and, it is said, greatly lessened the numbers of the first-class ticket-holders. However that may be, it happened that a Mr Wilson took his seat in a first-class compartment at Cannon Street Station on the afternoon of the day succeeding that terrible crime. The friend who saw him off remarked on his having the compartment to himself, adding that he was not likely to be troubled with company on account of yesterday's catastrophe. Accordingly, the pause at London Bridge had been made without any one entering Mr Wilson's carriage, and the train was in motion again, when the door flew open, and a man rushed in, and was flung into a seat by the starting of the engine. Much wrapped up, with his hat crushed down over his forehead, his height and appearance at once suggested to Mr Wilson that he was shut in with Müller himself. The resolute mouth and pointed chin—the only features distinctly visible—tallied with the descriptions of the murderer, of which Mr Wilson's mind was full. From behind the shelter of the 'Times' newspaper he continued to observe the newcomer and to compare item by item his appearance with the description in the columns before him. Ever and anon, while so engaged, his eyes met the wavering glances of the stranger, full of ominous meaning—so it seemed to him—and when he rose, unbuttoned his overcoat, and consulted a handsome gold watch with pendent seals, Mr Wilson thought he saw before his eyes the very property of the unhappy Mr Briggs. Reason is a light rider, and easily thrown when Imagination runs away with it, and fear, though it may brace for a moment the sinews of the body, relaxes those of the mind; so, when the stranger moved along the carriage, seated himself opposite Mr Wilson, and asked, in a hesitating guttural voice—in every tone of which Mr Wilson heard the accent of the Teuton—if 'they were not timed to run thirty minutes without stopping?' Mr Wilson could only nod—his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and his eyes could not withdraw their gaze from the fiery orbs opposite.

While the two men sat thus, glaring at each other, the train dashed with a prolonged scream into the S— tunnel, and the carriage was instantly in total darkness. At that moment Mr Wilson's wrists were seized with a grasp of iron. Deprived of the power of resistance, he sat preparing himself for the death-struggle as best he might, his hands held as in a vice, his eyes straining through the darkness, a cold sweat oozing at every pore. As he sat thus, it flashed into his mind that his assailant would probably wait for a glimmer of light before aiming his death-blow. As he thought this, they were out into the daylight, glaring at each other and gasping. Then Mr Wilson felt his enemy's hands relax, and heard him say in an interrupted voice: 'I beg your pardon; I'm afraid I've startled you. The fact is—the plain truth—I didn't like your looks, and the way you hid your face behind that paper and watched me. I suppose my mind is full of this horrible murder. I see now I was mistaken. But—pardon me; I really began to think you might be—Müller!'

With a half-hysterical laugh, Mr Wilson responded: 'And I've been in an awful funk, for that's just who I thought you were!'

In this instance, prejudice yielded to the knowledge gained by travel; for before they reached M—, the seeds of a friendship, still flourishing, were sown in the minds of these two wayfarers on the Iron Road.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE GREAT COTTON GAME.

BUT while affairs in London thus moved smoothly and with a comfortable lack of interest, matters in Lancashire were excited to a degree which presently wrought great consequences on all concerned in this history. George Suffield, even during his weeks of sailing to and fro to the Isle of Man, had committed himself seriously to speculation in cotton. Before the holiday season, he had had several successful deals through Tanderjee and Gorgonio; but their success had been quite eclipsed by that ventured on—and noted in a former chapter—by the advice of Gorgonio. His speculation in Septembers enriched him in a very few days by about two thousand pounds: he bought—through Gorgonio—at 5½ (that is, 5½d. per pound)—and sold again within a fortnight at 6½.

Thus elated and made confident, before even the end of August he began to buy largely of Octobers and Novembers—still through Gorgonio—with the intention of holding; for Mr Gorgonio's longing for a 'corner' in cotton had not been uttered in inattentive ears. The truth is, George had caught the fever of speculation, and caught it badly; besides the attractive feelings of danger and excitement, it created dreams of vast wealth to be realised in a few months, visions of ease and luxury, love and idleness, with the one adorable woman of the world sitting queen of all. That Isabel was always first in his thoughts, that all his design was for her ultimate adornment and delectation, redeems George's aberration into this doubtful course from

the suspicion of sordidness and vulgarity. He was the kind of lover who is not demonstrative in word or gesture, but who expresses himself in gifts; and his designs for gifts were magnificent, though they were not love. The methods, however, by which he was led on and tempted to arrive at the fulfilment of his designs—and the toils in which he became snared—are of such prodigious moment that they must be dealt with fully by themselves. But first it is necessary to relate one or two matters connected therewith.

Daniel Trichinopoly had been so affected and scared by the dumb, death-bed confidences of his late master, that he had determined (almost) to forswear Tanderjee and Gorgonio, and with the tolerable wealth which the Sahib Raynor had conferred on him—the gratuity of fifty pounds and the legacy of fifty pounds more—to return over sea to his native place. But his new master had received him back with such signal favour, and had so loudly opposed his expressed desire that he might ‘go away,’ that he remained. It was inevitable that Daniel, having thus far yielded to temptation, should return to Tanderjee, and that Tanderjee should remind him with tears of the ‘beautiful’ tricks they had intended to play together—with the result that the impression of the Sahib Raynor’s death-bed became fainter and fainter, and that the last case of Daniel was worse than his first.

Precious time had been lost, and Daniel became angrily impatient to attain his ends. The most pressing and important of these was not only to become acquainted with the new Suffield machinery, but to get at the plans of it, of which Daniel was prepared to make ‘tracing copies.’ But he could do nothing for fear of ‘the old Guru.’ He had discovered that the Tame Philosopher now frequented nightly that part of the clough about the counting-house, and he was certain that he was on the watch.

He dropped this and that tale—not altogether untrue—into the ‘respectable Mister George’s’ private ear of the opprobrious things the Guru had said, or was reported to have said, concerning his ‘dear master,’ so that the Tame Philosopher was asked to dinner no more, and Mr George when he met him passed him with the merest word, cold and curt; and, last of all, he told the ‘respectable Mister George’ that he had caught the Guru on a certain occasion when he had come up to the hall to interview Mr George, listening at the library door when he (Mr George) and Mr Gorgonio were talking of cotton and of ‘corners.’ After that, Mr George refused to see the Tame Philosopher. But he was scarcely prepared for the immediate, and still less for a consequent, result. The immediate result was the Tame Philosopher’s migration to London, which was brought about by his writing a letter to the elder Mr Suffield of such a nature that the latter felt bound to invite the Philosopher to London. He needed a Secretary: every public man should have a Secretary; he would invite his old friend to be his Secretary; and his old friend would aid him in the invention and the writing of those speeches on great questions which his wife so longed that he should deliver.

Thus it came about that in less than a week

after Suffield had received the above letter, the Tame Philosopher left Lancashire and established himself as Secretary in Rutland Gate, with a lodging in the Brompton Road. Then came the subsequent result, unlooked for by Mr George.

The Tame Philosopher lost no time in looking up his ‘young friend’ Mr Alan Ainsworth; for he considered that—besides being Secretary to a politician, and partly on that account—he was eminently fitted to utter opinions on public questions, and that his eloquent style was certain to fascinate the London people and to bring himself the reputation and content for which his soul did pine.

One evening, therefore, when Ainsworth was rumpling his hair and tugging his moustache over his work, the Philosopher was unexpectedly ushered in.

‘You are busy, my dear young friend,’ said he, sitting down. ‘It is well to be busy, but not too busy. I would adapt Solomon’s maxim and say, “Be not busy overmuch.”’

‘Yes; I am rather busy,’ said Ainsworth, tapping his teeth with the handle of his pen; he found, presently, that he might lay his pen down, for the Philosopher had come to stay.

That was the Philosopher’s opportunity, and, after a complimentary remark or two concerning the quality, in his estimation, of Ainsworth’s work, he launched his proposal.

‘Do you know,’ said he, ‘that I have what should be a fruitful idea, and I am willing to offer it to you for the benefit of your paper. I shall write a weekly article—I think the form of a letter would be best—giving my opinion of the world to the world—what I think of its silliness, its folly, its chicanery, and its villainy. I am now in the very midst of things political; and I have sounded to the bottom the working of Lancashire industry and understand all its villainies.’

‘What, by the way,’ asked Ainsworth, with some hope of diverting or defeating the Philosopher’s evident intention of asking employment from him, ‘has become of my pet villain, Daniel Trichinopoly?’

‘Oh,’ said the Philosopher, ‘Daniel seems to be very well, and is certainly flourishing exceedingly under the *agis* of the house of Suffield. How exactly he is occupied I do not know; but he is deep in the confidence of Mr Suffield the younger, and he seems to have great influence over him. I may say, without prejudice to humanity in general, or to the race to which he belongs in particular, that I do not like Daniel, or trust him. He appears to be a child of light; but in reality, I fear, he is a creature of darkness: he has a notorious devil in his eye, and I doubt his end will not be peace with honour.’

‘Do you think,’ said Ainsworth, remembering his experience of Daniel in the opium den, ‘that he is engaged in some villainy?’

‘That,’ answered the Philosopher, ‘I would not venture to say. But he is prodigiously interested in cotton, like his master; and there is room in that for plenty of villainy. And, talking of cotton, my dear young friend, I would like to write for you an article on “corners” in cotton.’

'What exactly is a cotton "corner?"' asked Ainsworth.

'Well, my dear young sir, I'll explain by analogy. In Egypt in the olden days Joseph made a "corner" in grain: he bought up all the grain he could lay hands on and held it till people had to go to him and buy at whatever price he chose to sell. That was a notable "corner."

'Well,' said Ainsworth, 'write your article, and I'll submit it.'

The end was that the Tame Philosopher wrote his article on cotton 'corners,' wrote it, moreover, as one who had special knowledge of the subject, wrote it with particular mention of a 'corner' that was imminent in Lancashire, in which certain foreigners of Levantine and Indian origin would probably be found concerned. And the article was published and widely quoted and commented on (in Liverpool especially); and it was read by—among others—the elder Suffield, who wrote straightway to his son, and put such questions as these: Do you know anything from hearsay of this 'corner'? Have you made any provision of stock against it? And, do you think it likely that your ugly foreign broker—Levantine or something—whom we met that day in the Isle of Man, has anything to do with it?

George Suffield was angry and alarmed. He was angry because he knew—for his father told him—that M'Fie had written the article; and he thought that M'Fie knew far more than he possibly could know, that being a philosopher, metaphysical, prying, secretive, and crafty, he had argued out a conclusion, which in truth, like many a philosopher, he had only blundered on. And he was alarmed, because he feared that the incipient 'corner' might be spoiled by the shyness of operators on 'Change, and that his own design might be ruined and his father somehow might learn the whole business. He therefore wrote to Mr Gorgonio advising great caution in buying up 'futures'—though he would suggest not so much that he should restrict purchases as 'spread them out small among a great many people'—and declaring that it would be better thenceforward that he should not be publicly seen with Gorgonio, but that communications between them should be by letter, or through Mr Tanderjee or Daniel Trichinopoly. Nevertheless, one final confidential interview he thought they might have, to settle an important point: 'Shall we continue to think of a corner, or shall we not?' and he begged Mr Gorgonio to come on a certain evening to dinner to meet Mr Tanderjee and to stay the night.

On a certain evening, then, the three sat at dinner in Holdsworth Hall, and gradually grew more flushed and gay with the excellent meats and drinks that were set before them. Daniel waited upon them, and as he moved with soft self-possession and an easy smile behind their chairs, and as they ate and drank and talked, it really seemed as if Daniel were the only person there, and the others were puppets which he cleverly manipulated. And this was the conversation of moment in which Daniel seemed especially concerned.

'We have done a good deal of business together, Mr Gorgonio,' said George expansively, 'and you

have never led me wrong: not once have I lost a farthing through you; not only have I lost nothing, but I have made a good deal. I take this opportunity, Gorgonio, of acknowledging it.'

George put his hand to his glass; Daniel noiselessly approached and filled it, and then filled that of Gorgonio, and the two puppets bowed to each other, and Gorgonio murmured, 'A vot' santé'—and Daniel smiled his approval as they both raised their glass and drank.

'I think,' said Gorgonio with a smile, 'we quite understand each other.—What, Mr Suffiel, is your opinion of the present state of the cotton market? Ha, ha!'

'We stand pretty well—don't we? We hold contracts for eighty thousand bales of the December-January deliveries—do we not?'

'Contracts, Mr Suffiel, for ninety thousand December-Januaries!' exclaimed Gorgonio. 'I bought ten thousand more to-day! Now see here, Mr Suffiel! Mark my word! Not a single one bale will be tendered in December! Because why, Mr Suffiel? Because, sir, we are in November, and there is no more than ninety thousand bales in the whole city, and the stock will be not much more in December, because not so much cotton will come in as people expect—I have show you the American crop is shorter than they think—and we keep our advantage by buying. If on the 31st of December there is no more than one hundred thousand bales in Liverpool, and we hold contracts for ninety thousand still, then, Mr Suffiel, we control the market!'

'I want to do more than control the market,' answered George, expanding his chest: 'I want to rule it.'

'Go on with corner? Ah, if you do that!' exclaimed Gorgonio. 'Ah!' he sighed, and his eye flashed. And Tanderjee murmured 'Ah!' and his eye flashed behind his spectacles; but Daniel behind them all only smiled with superior benignity like a bronze Buddha.

Then there was evidently a breathless moment for the three Asiatics—the two puppets and the other, who for the nonce forgot his part of manipulator—until George resumed the conversation, with trade technicalities interspersed that would not be likely to interest the reader. Then George pushed back his chair preparatory to departing into the billiard-room.

When they had spent some considerable time in the billiard-room, Tanderjee departed to catch his last train for home, and in a little while George and his remaining guest went to bed. Then—again a little while—and the house appeared all quiet and dark. To make sure that all was quiet when all was dark, a dark figure, darker and more substantial than the darkness, with no gleam of white anywhere about it, neither on face nor hands, passed softly along the upper corridor and listened at this door and at that. As the figure turned away from the second door, a board creaked dully beneath its tread and beneath the carpet, as if the ghost of Hamlet's father were in 'the cellarage' and fumbling to get out. But the figure went on softly—on and down the wide stairs to the hall and to the hall door. By the time the bolts and chains of the door had been carefully undone, another dark

figure, but with touches of lighter colour about face and hands, appeared softly at the top of the stairs and leaned over. As soon as the door was unfastened and the first figure had passed softly out, softly latching the door, the second figure sped swiftly and softly down the stairs, found the latch of the door, and slipped carefully out after the first.

The first figure was Daniel Trichinopoly. He had private business on hand that night, and privately he was setting about it. He had not yet discovered where the plans of the new machinery were kept, and every day that passed made the necessity for their speedy discovery more and more insistent. In the second figure it would not have been difficult to recognise the ugly Gorgonio. And the first sped on through the thick November night, and the second had great trouble to follow near enough and yet far enough off—over the sodden grass of the park, across the fence into the clough, over the brook by the little rustic bridge—that was rather difficult for Gorgonio, without incurring the risk of being seen, but he achieved it on his stomach—and along the further bank of the stream to a hole!—merely a hole in the side of the clough, like a rabbit's burrow enlarged, almost hidden by a bush and almost blocked by a large stone! To Gorgonio's amazement, Daniel quickly stripped himself to his under garments, laid himself down, and crept into the hole! Gorgonio sat down on the stone by the hole to wait for Daniel's return, and to meditate on the possible purpose of Daniel's burrowing.

'He do not visit his native home that way,' he murmured to himself, 'No, no; the way is too long and too war-rm! Ho, ho!' and he chuckled at the grimness of his joke. 'But where goes he, the dear Daniel? It is necessary he go somewhere, and for something. Lofe? No, not Daniel. Money? Eh? Something—something in a house: there is no money in this English ground. Ah, and we know in our East—do we not, Daniel?—that way of digging hole to enter house! Now where is a house?'

He rose from the stone and explored a few paces in the direction in which the hole seemed to run, and peered through the darkness a few paces farther still. He thought he saw a wall. He pushed a little nearer, and made out a small building of two storeys, whose outward wall was apparently part of the circumambient wall of the Suffolk works.

'Ah, yes,' said he to himself. 'Here is something; and certainly here must be something inside. Windows strong and barred like prison; and *chevauc de frise* on walls. Certainly there is something inside.'

But lest Daniel should have slipped out of the hole, Gorgonio returned. Daniel's clothes were still there, so he sat upon the stone at the entrance, with his eye upon the building which he had discovered. When he had sat some time and was becoming cold, he was certain that he saw a light flash in a window of the building. He jumped up.

'Ah, the dear Daniel! He must be there! Now I will have laugh to myself! Now I will scare him; now I will frighten him! Oh, ho, ho! How he will be frighten, the dear Daniel!'

He ran along to the building, threw pebbles and dirt at the windows, and shouted in a gruff voice: 'Ho, ho! I saw you! Come out, sir! Come out!' and then ran back to the hole and laid himself on the stone with his face ready to put against the opening. When he heard a rumbling and heavy breathing, he prepared, and when Daniel's head appeared from the hole he faced it, and said: 'How do you do?'

(To be continued.)

THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.

THOUGH the lower slopes of the Lebanon are well known to the European inhabitants of Syria, who make these hills their summer resort, the upper ranges, clad in eternal snow, remain comparatively unexplored. When travellers invade the heights, the magnet which draws them thither is 'The Cedars;' and they have little idea that they are entering a region fraught with historic and romantic interest, and whose scenery, in grandeur and in varied effects, equals that of the Alps. One might spend several weeks among these hills and valleys, and yet leave much that is beautiful unseen.

We, unfortunately, had only four days at our disposal; the time assigned for our tour in Palestine was almost at an end, and we were on our way to Beyrout to join the steamer for Athens. We had started from England towards the close of March, and landing at Jaffa on the 11th of April, had resigned ourselves to the care of Bernhardt Heilpern, Messrs Cook's chief dragoon. Under his guidance we journeyed north through Bethel, Samaria, and Nazareth; then east to Damascus; and then northward again to the magnificent ruins of Baalbek, and we determined that, if possible, we would go to Beyrout via the Cedars of Lebanon.

There is a certain charm in getting quite off the beaten track, and in accomplishing something that others leave undone; so that, though all through the tour the Ultima Thule of our ambition had been Lebanon and the Cedars, the desire to see them increased when Bernhardt told us that few travellers found it possible to cross the highest range, where the Cedars are situated, the paths being impassable from the snow until late in the spring.

On the 12th of May, an intensely cold morning, we left Baalbek; and as we rode across the plain, the blasts from the snow-covered mountains became more and more bitter, till, when camping at Ain-ata, we were glad to sit round a camp-fire, though even then, while our faces were roasted, our backs were frozen. To add to the discomfort, a sudden gust blew down tent after tent, discovering the occupants sitting among the ruins—that is, their beds and baggage. The effect was ludicrous; and shouts of laughter greeted each unfortunate individual who was added to the number of the tentless. But we soon became grave on finding that all attempts to put up the tents were ineffectual, and that if the hurricane continued, we should be obliged to seek shelter in the village huts. A description of these huts will enable the reader to realise the situation. Imagine a low square hut built

of earth baked hard by the sun, with a roof of branches held together by mud; a hole at one side answers the triple purpose of door, window, and ventilation; the interior is divided into two rooms, in which the only furniture is a few cooking utensils; these rooms being occupied by the entire family, among whom are numbered the donkey and the poultry. With one voice we exclaimed: 'We will rather sleep in the open air than enter one of those filthy places.' Fortunately, however, the wind abated as suddenly as it had risen, and we were able to use our tents.

The villagers, on finding that it was our intention to cross the mountains, did their best to dissuade us, telling us that there had been a fresh fall of snow that morning, and that it was too deep for the horses to go through. But Bernhardt, steadfastly ignoring these remarks, engaged two sheikhs as guides, and twenty-one men to lead the horses and mules, as there was no trace of a path. We were a goodly procession as we started from the camp to climb the glittering wall of snow which rose before us. There were eleven of us mounted on horses; then came the baggage mules, twenty-one in number, and following these, several horses and donkeys carrying food for our animals. Our party was a mixture of the picturesque and the ridiculous, and the Europeans suffered from being in close contrast with the Orientals—we were ridiculous, and the Syrians picturesque.

We thoroughly enjoyed the ride up the steep side of the mountain; and our wonder and interest were awakened by the clever way our horses picked their path, rarely making a false step, though the going was extremely bad. Suddenly we came to a snow-drift, and the foremost horse went in up to the girths.

'Now, ladies and gentlemen,' said Bernhardt, 'you will please to dismount, and the guides will carry you.'

To this, though the gentlemen objected, the ladies agreed.

After a consultation, Mrs V—— started in 'sedan-chair' fashion, but she was soon deposited in the snow, the men not understanding that mode of carrying. The experiment was repeated, but with the same result; and then Mrs V——, objecting to being made a laughing-stock, refused to be carried any farther, and walked the rest of the way.

Then I tried; but, taking Bernhardt's advice, I climbed on to the man's back, as to this way of carrying burdens he was accustomed. I am about five feet one, and as broad as I am long; the man was about my height, but slight, and therefore I was not surprised to find, after a few steps, myself buried in the snow, with the man buried beneath me. He picked up both himself and me; and on we went, only to fall again amid the laughter of the others. A third time he tried, but with no better success; and then I followed my friend's example, and walked, as I did not wish to be summoned by the 'Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals,' one of our party being President of the Society in his particular town.

When all had passed safely through, we mounted our horses and rode on. Just before reaching the crest of the mountain, we turned to look our last on the 'Holy Land.' Stretched

at our feet lay the plain of Buka'a; across it, miles away, the ruins of Baalbek could just be distinguished; in the far distance were the snow-clad slopes of Hermon glittering in the sunshine.

We passed over the ridge, and stood entranced by the magnificence of the view which met our gaze. To the right and left stretched the curving lines of snow-capped mountains, until, in the far distance, they were scarcely to be distinguished from the masses of cloud; and at the edge of the snow-line, apparently a few hundred feet below, a dark cluster of trees was visible.

'Look—there are the Cedars!'

'Those the Cedars!' we said, disappointed; having pictured to ourselves giants of the forest.

'They are not the dwarfs they appear to be; remember, they are two thousand feet below us,' said Bernhardt; and his estimate was right, for it took us an hour and a half to reach them.

We stood for some time gazing at the indescribable beauty of a panorama in which nature revealed herself under many aspects. On the heights, winter reigned supreme; the snow lay thick on the ground, and there was no sign of vegetation. Lower down, the earth, bare and brown, was strewn with rocks and stones hurled down by the winter's storms; and deep blue lines marked out the course of ravines and gullies; lower still, Spring had begun her gentle sway, and the landscape was clothed with tender green, which, as the gaze travelled downwards, gradually deepened and became richer, until the full glory of summer was attained. In the far distance, ten thousand feet below, lay the blue Mediterranean, separated from the land by a strip of golden sand; and to the left, where the mountains met the sea, was a small cluster of houses, which we were told was Beyrout—and we rejoiced to know that through this glorious scenery we were to take our four days' ride.

Time being precious, we could not afford to linger, and so followed the winding downward path as quickly as its roughness would allow, and were glad to dismount and rest under the shadow of the Cedars of Lebanon. From the mossy ground, starred with forget-me-nots and anemones, rose the massive red stems, with their spreading branches bending under a burden of freshly-fallen snow; shafts of sunlight falling across the boughs and lighting up the darkness of the grove.

There is a great deal of romantic interest attached to these trees. One has heard of them from childhood, and has pictured to one's self trees of more than ordinary beauty, and of an exceptional fragrance. These ideas probably arise from knowing that Solomon considered no other wood worthy of being used in the adornment of the Temple, and that Tiglath-Pileser, having conquered Carchemish, came hither for the express purpose of carrying away a goodly number of these forest treasures to beautify his palaces.

It is probable that at a very distant date the slopes of Lebanon were clothed with forest; but from time to time so many trees have been cut down by the Syrians themselves, as well as by their conquerors, that at the present day they exist only in small isolated groves. The most extensive of these, known to us as 'The Cedars

of Lebanon,' is called by the Syrians 'The Grove of the Lord,' and in it there are three hundred and ninety-three trees; of these, only twelve are of any great size, and they have received the name of 'The Twelve Apostles,' from a tradition that Christ once visited this spot with his apostles, who planted their staves, which grew into these goodly Cedars. The Maronite Patriarch claims the grove as his especial property, and allows no one to cut down or to harm the trees.

I can scarcely describe that afternoon's ride, which was an almost unbroken succession of wonders. Wild and grand, the scenery varied with each turn of the path: we rode on the verge of precipices, down narrow defiles, through streams, and over rocks, across which one would have thought it impossible for a horse to go; but ours picked their way so steadily that we could give all our attention to our magnificent surroundings. Our route lay through several villages, and one of these I especially remember. Built on the side of a ravine, so steep was the slope, that the flat-roofed stone houses looked like a succession of steps, the upper storey of one being on a level with the ground-floor of the one above. Here the women wore the head-dress peculiar to the Maronites—a flowing white veil, surmounted by an inverted silver bowl, which is handed down from mother to daughter, and carefully guarded as an heirloom. The people crowded out to see us pass, and broke from the apple-trees blossom-laden branches, and gave them to us.

That night we camped at the edge of a ravine, opposite to Hazrun, another Maronite town, and during the evening the sheik paid us a visit and smoked a friendly pipe. In a truly Eastern fashion, he placed all his possessions at our disposal, and offered to send his men to guard the camp. This we refused, our own servants being sufficient protection.

The start next morning was not made so early as usual, as some of the party wished to return the sheik's visit. They passed round the head of the ravine to Hazrun, and made their way to the sheik's house, where he received them in a friendly manner and introduced them to his wife and son. I did not go, but instead, remained at the edge of the gorge and watched the ever-varying scene. As the sun rose, the shadows disappeared; the mists on the mountain's breast melted into light; and the faintly-crimsoned clouds which guarded the heights rolling back to let in the morning glory, revealed range behind range and peak above peak. Opposite was a stream which seemed to leap in mad joy to meet its kindred waters in the gorge below. Our domestic affairs also claimed my attention. Usually, the tents were taken down while we breakfasted; and when we came out of the dining tent, the horses were ready, and we mounted and rode off, leaving the servants to follow when they had finished packing. Later on, when we stopped to lunch, the baggage mules passed, and on arriving at our halting-place, everything, including afternoon tea, was in readiness. Not so in these regions. All the guides but one had been sent back, and as the servants did not know the way, they were to accompany us.

On that day, more grand scenery was in store for us, and there was a continual feast for the eyes. The guide lost his way, and led us by

a path even rougher than that of the day before. First a snow-covered shoulder of the mountain had to be traversed; then there was a long and precipitous descent to a desolate valley; now a morass was passed, now a torrent forded; at one time we crossed a natural bridge, overhung on one side by a huge cavern, and on the other dropping suddenly to a deep ravine; and so riding onwards and downwards, we drew slowly nearer to our resting-place, and to the sea, still several thousand feet below, until a sudden turn of the path brought us to the village of El Mnetira, and in full view of the most magnificent waterfall of the Lebanon, the Fountain of Afka.

We rode over the bridge to the other side of the river, and passed the evening on the river's bank, amid a scene of entrancing beauty. Above, from a limestone precipice, rushed the Fountain of Afka, dashing in three wild leaps from the cave to the river Adonis below, its dark waters transformed in the brilliant moonlight to a glittering fall of silver. High up in the face of the cliffs, lights were seen moving to and fro; and on inquiring, we found that there were passages in the rocks, and that the shepherds, who used these passages for housing their flocks, were passing up and down to see that all was well. We had time to call to mind the legend of Venus and Adonis, which tradition assigns to this spot; close by are the ruins of a temple of Venus; and it was here that the maidens of Lebanon came once a year to chant a lament for Adonis: 'I mourn Adonis—the beautiful Adonis is dead.'

On the third day we gradually left the wilderness, to which we had become accustomed, and our way lay by fields of springing corn, past terraces of apple and mulberry trees, until we entered a valley piled throughout its entire length with extraordinary masses of limestone rock. These rocks, whose softer parts have been worn away by the action of many storms, have formed themselves into grotesque groups, and in some cases with so near a resemblance to a town, that, until we were close to them, we were under the impression that we were approaching an inhabited and fortified place, with battlements and towers standing clearly out against the sky.

That night we camped at Ajeltun. This last night in tents was destined to be exceedingly uncomfortable, for, shortly after we had retired, the wind suddenly rose and threatened to overturn the tents; and the men were kept hard at work throughout the night hammering in the tent-pegs and piling stones on the ropes to keep them taut, and the continual hammering effectually kept us awake.

The next morning we mounted our horses for the last time, and rode slowly down the paved steps of the old Roman road. At every turn vegetation became more and more luxuriant; the ground was carpeted with flowers, and on all sides rose groves of orange and mulberry trees. We passed many a prosperous town, with its white churches and convents standing out against a background of pines; its large house, belonging to the sheik, surrounded by the dwellings of his dependents; and always we descended by precipitous paths, until at last we reached the foot of the hill from which flows the 'Fog River.'

Having passed beneath rocks inscribed with the

names of Assyrian and Roman emperors, and under the old Roman aqueduct, with piers curtained by tall grasses, and arches fringed with maiden-hair fern, we turned the corner, and came upon this inscription, printed in large letters, on the cliff: 'London Waterworks Company;' and then we realised that we had left the romantic and returned to the commonplace. A few hours' ride, first along the level sands, and then on the Damascus highway, brought us to Beyrout, where we dismounted at the 'Belle Vue Hotel,' and resigning our steeds into the hands of their attendants, realised with regret that our four days' ride in the Lebanon had become a thing of the past.

THE SACRED BEETLE.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

THE next day, the little pleasure party had broken up. I need scarcely remark, by the way, that Mr Cotton, with praiseworthy honesty, but considerable trepidation lest his temporary appropriation of the Doctor's scarab should have been discovered, had, unobserved, replaced the 'nasty, stinkin' bug' in the place where he had found it. Only three of the community we have become acquainted with remained at Shepherd's, namely, Miss Emerson, the Masher, and our hero. The Parson had swept his helpmate away in a torrent of conjugal indignation; the Misses Jenkins had departed for Alexandria *en route* to Italy; and Mr Cotton had found that he could no longer stay away from 'Hengland' and the rise and fall of the money market: he wished to be on the spot. But before dismissing him from our pages, it is only fitting to remark that he never forgot that last evening on the Nile boat and the attentions which were then paid him. Until he married, he used to rhapsodise on the 'doocid fine women' who appreciated his wit and lively conversation. On his attempting, however, some weeks after his marriage, to enlarge on the subject and glorify the occasion thereof, he met with such a sarcastic rebuff from his wife that he relegated the little episode to the pages of the past, which are usually kept turned down and under lock and key. As for poor Miss Priscilla Jenkins, she never forgot the handsome Doctor; and even the snappish Miss Hester would at times regretfully dream of 'those lovely eyes.'

It was at this time that Dr von Eberstein made the acquaintance of Colonel Merritt, and related to him what the Colonel called 'the richest joke he ever heard.'

The intimacy between Miss Emerson and the Professor grew apace. He discovered in her a kindred mind, a breadth of perception and thought which he had never expected to find in a woman; and she, recognising his sterling qualities and honesty of mind and purpose, thought more highly of him from day to day. I believe the Masher stayed on partly from curiosity, and partly because he wished to see whether the other ladies at the hotel would behave towards the Professor in a similar fashion to those who had been on the boat with him. He was not disappointed. The unhappy German became, much to his embarrassment, the lion of the hotel,

and would at times seek refuge in his room, where he smoked incessantly, and tore his hair with bewilderment.

One fine evening, Miss Emerson and Von Eberstein were strolling in the garden, when the former said quietly: 'Doctor, I have never seen what it is you always carry in that little box in your waistcoat pocket. Will you show it to me?'

'Certainly, my dear lady.' And he extracted the bronze scarab and laid it in her palm. As he did so, it seemed to both as though an electric shock had passed through them. The Doctor's heart rose to his lips, and the words he had for weeks been longing to speak came flowing forth.

'Miss Emerson, I am but a poor German Professor, but I love you very dearly; you must have seen it. Have I any hope that you will return my affection?'

She was silent for a while, twisting the little beetle this way and that in her hand. Then: 'Are you in earnest, Doctor von Eberstein?'

He drew himself up bravely before her. 'I am so much in earnest, Miss Emerson, that I have come to regard you as a part of my life. I am not good at fine phrases; my life has been passed in study. But I can honestly and truthfully declare to you that I have never said to any woman what I have now said to you. If you reject my suit, I do not say, as some do, that I shall go to the dogs or do anything foolish. Nē-ē! That would be cowardly. But I do say that in that case I will never ask another woman to share my life with me. It is a poor life, but I lay it at your feet.'

She was silent again for a few moments, and then, turning to him with a bright smile on her face, said: 'I believe you, Carl; and I will trust myself to you.'

With a slight ejaculation, he drew her into his arms and kissed her: 'It is our betrothal,' he said.

During the next half-hour, as they paced to and fro, he confided to her the whole secret of his journey to Egypt, and showed her the ancient parchment which had led him to undertake it.

She mused awhile, and then asked: 'So you do not know the powers which this little scarab is supposed to possess?'

He shook his head solemnly.

To his astonishment, she broke into a peal of ringing laughter. 'Oh, Carl, how stupid you are! Why, I guessed them at once. Now,' she continued, 'you just lock it up and don't carry it about with you until you are allowed.' And she returned it to him. Again that electric shock seemed to flash through both. 'Now you notice how the ladies will treat you.'

That evening, sure enough, Doctor von Eberstein was left in peace. He was not the recipient of embarrassing attentions from the feminine portion of the community, and he was devoutly thankful therefor. He didn't understand the reason; but he had his orders, and that was sufficient for him. After some days of this rest and quietness, his mistress commanded him to come down to dinner with his scarab in his pocket. The old annoyance was promptly revived, and the badgered lover could not obtain

five minutes' uninterrupted conversation with his fiancée, who seemed to enjoy his predicament.

The next morning she asked him with a smile: 'Well, cannot you now guess at the peculiar properties of your scarab?'

He answered slowly: 'I do not *know*, but it seems to me that whenever I have it about me, I am most troubled with unwelcome attentions.'

'Of course that's it! Don't you see that whoever is its possessor is an object of attraction to the other sex?'

'So-o-o?' said he, thoughtfully, with the long German drawl. 'Then I shall lock it up, and no one shall carry it about.'

'Lend it to me, Carl,' said Miss Emerson with a wicked twinkle in her eyes.

'Nē-ē! Gott bewahre!' he replied hastily.

'But I want to have some fun with it.' And after much coaxing, she had her own way.

Miss Emerson took a malicious delight in showing the little antique to the oldest and ugliest people in the room, and then casually begging them to retain it for a short time until she returned. Then, accompanied by Von Eberstein and Colonel Merritt—who now participated in the secret—she would plant herself in some quiet corner and survey the effects of her practical joke, which were as amusing to her co-conspirators as herself. Old men and young men, all deserted their partners, and clustered round the delighted but bewildered possessor, for the time, of the talisman. The younger ladies were furious. Then Miss Emerson would glide softly up to her victim and reclaim her scarab, thanking the unfortunate individual most affectionately for having taken care of it; and then the galaxy of admirers would desert the elderly lady, and hover around Miss Emerson until she gave up the lodestone to Von Eberstein and bade him lock it away.

As the period of our hero's leave approached its expiration, he reminded his fiancée that she had promised to return with him to Germany as his wife. She acquiesced in the reasonableness of the proposition; and a month later there was a very pretty wedding. I don't know whether she wore the scarab about her somewhere, but it was certainly a fact that the male portion of the spectators of the ceremony unanimously declared that the bride was the loveliest woman they had ever set eyes on; while the ladies eulogised Doctor von Eberstein's looks, and his eyes in particular. The couple may have worn it turn about, but I can't say.

On the second evening out from Alexandria, Doctor and Mrs von Eberstein were leaning against the bulwarks of the big steamer, listening to the measured thud of the screw, and watching the calm moonlit sea as they sped along.

'Carl, dear,' said Mrs von Eberstein, 'do you place any great value on that little scarab of yours?'

'Why, no; not now,' he answered. 'I think it is a very dangerous possession for any one. I shall never dare to tell the story of it, for I should not be believed, nor would I care to try its powers any more.'

'Have you got it about you now, dear?'

'Yes—in my waistcoat pocket, as usual.'

'Kiss me, Carl.'

And as he took her in his arms, her deft fingers slipped into his waistcoat pocket and brought out the little box.

'You will always love me, Carl?'

'Always, my dear.'

'Then'—And she stretched her arm over the vessel's side; her fingers opened; there was a momentary flash of light, and the Sacred Beetle had vanished for ever from human eyes.

OUR BANK.

BY DEPOSITOR NUMBER ONE.

THE old Lady of Threadneedle Street does not concern herself about Our Bank, neither do the makers of guide-books for London; therefore, it is not necessary to point out the exact locality in which it stands; suffice it to say that it is attached to a fairly prosperous Co-operative Society, and is of the genus known as 'Penny.' The founders of our bank were men of simple minds and kindly hearts, who thought it right, with the intent of 'teaching the young idea,' to decorate the inside page of the little deposit books with homely mottoes, or, as they called them, 'good words.' 'A Penny saved is a Penny gained.'

'If youth did know what age would crave,
Many a shilling youth would save.'

'There is many a poor creature now crawling through life, miserable himself, and the cause of misery in others, who might have lifted up his head and prospered, if he had begun early to save his pennies.' And others of a like character. One—the last on the list—having a peculiar attraction for the eye by reason of its quaint emphasis: 'Resolve never to be poor. Whatever you have, spend less.'

Years have rolled by; perhaps dignity has grown with numbers; our depositors are now counted by thousands; but is it, one wonders, to the advantage of the present generation of 'young ideas' that these trite and homely sayings have been discarded, and their places filled with rules and regulations couched in legal phrases?

If one were to ask a small depositor in the motto days, 'What is written inside your book?' out would come the sayings in a string. But ask the same question to-day, and it is safe to guarantee that not one in twenty has read the rules, let alone committed them to memory. After all, the rules of our bank are but few, and anything but stringent; and perhaps it is this absence of red-tapeism which makes it popular among a class not generally credited with thrifty habits. 'Arry and 'Arriet are not fond of the Post-office Bank, for instance, with its documents and signings; but they like our bank—'Cos yer can 'ave yer money out w'en yer wants to without any fuss.' And they do have it out too. No need to refer to an almanac to tell when bank holidays are near—a glance at the withdrawal column of our

ledger is quite sufficient. One must confess that 'Arry and 'Arriet are not permanently thrifty, and that the sums they save seldom amount to pounds; but again and again the effort is made to 'get a few shillings by' in view of a rainy day or special event. The amounts entered also vary in accordance with the financial barometer for the time being. 'Can't spare more this week, gov'nor;' and twopence is bounced down on the desk with an 'I-care-for-nobody' air that is quite refreshing.

The laws governing Our Bank dictate that not more than five shillings shall be received as one deposit; but we feel much inclined to break this law when our friend comes one week with six or seven shillings, and says, when the regulation is pointed out to him: 'Oh, well, I may as well chuck the other bob away, for it's bound to go.'

At the present moment there is a Bill before Parliament which proposes to raise the amount receivable to ten shillings. If this becomes law, it will be good news to our friend and others of his class.

Perhaps the best example of the notions of thrift entertained by this class of depositor, is furnished by the young man who appeared at the desk one evening sans collar—and probably shirt—and proffered this request: 'I-warnts-ter-shuv-in-er-bob-en-pull-it-art-(out)-ergin-nex-week.' Being learned in the vernacular by long training, we were able to translate this to mean that the young man desired to deposit one shilling and withdraw the same at a week's notice. Not wishing to discourage even this spasmodic effort at saving, we took the 'bob,' giving in return a little homily on the value of a more continuous system; but, unfortunately, we have forgotten whether the homily took effect, or whether the bob was 'pulled out,' as desired.

Not all our depositors are of this rough-and-ready shiftless type, of course; but they predominate, because the neighbourhood round Our Bank is known as a poor, not to say low, one. There are several well-known persons—known to the police, that is—who habitually use Our Bank, among them a whole family of burglars, several of the members of which do not require to save at the present time; also several nice old ladies, whose periodical visits are a thing to be dreaded, so powerfully does the odour of their favourite beverage pervade them. One could hardly be civil, for instance, to the old creature who says, with what she, no doubt, takes to be an insinuatingly friendly manner: 'Please, my dear, let me have a book for my dear little boy; he's gone to his dear little school, and I wants to save his dear little ha'pence for him till he comes back.' It was a known fact that the 'dear little boy' in question was spending his time in a Reformatory, and that the 'dear little ha'pence' would be wanted in a week or so to help to prepare our old friend for a visit to the lock-up; so the book was handed over without comment, and with the best grace possible under the circumstances.

It is frequently matter for speculation as to where some of our depositors keep their books when they do get them, they acquire such an exceptional degree of dinginess. How exceptional, may be gathered from the fact that it is almost impossible to touch them except with the extreme tips of one's fingers.

However, the struggles of poverty in its easier moments to defend itself against the more direful strain of the inevitable rainy day, are often too pathetic for laughter or scorn; and many are the tales of valiant striving to keep heads above water which reach the ears of those who officiate at Our Bank.

There is a necessary rule that for all sums withdrawn a certain specified notice must be given; but need it be said that this rule is often broken. One week out of work and the cupboard is bare, and 'If you can't let me have it to-night, I must pawn his things for bread;' or, 'I haven't another penny in the world' is the too frequent pleading. Be it noticed that the money is never demanded, always asked for, often with a humble apology, quite unwarranted, except for the knowledge that our bank is too great a convenience to be misused.

There is quite an amusing display of gratitude expressed by some of our depositors, even when entering in their moneys. One old Irish washer-woman, with a face as round, rosy, and clean as a pippin, and a smile as bright as a summer day, always drops a funny little curtsy when handing in her book and money; and says, 'Thank ye kindly, sir,' when receiving it back with the item—which, by the way, she is unable to read—duly entered. There is another Irishwoman who, some years ago, was left a widow with two or three fatherless children. She was poor, ignorant, and, one must confess, dirty; but she determined that her 'childer' should have some chance in life, if possible; so every penny she could scrape or they could gather was put into a book for each child, never to be trespassed upon until wanted to give them a start out into the world.

Some months ago, she came with pride to draw several pounds—'The first I've ever touched'—to get her girl an outfit before sending her to an Institution where she would be taught a useful trade. 'Now,' said she, 'I've only the boy and little one to bring on.'

These people are among our regular customers; and we have now been established long enough to see a whole generation of small depositors pass through the stages of boy and girlhood to man and womanhood, bringing in turn other small depositors to carry on the line. One's recollections of some of these depositors are very vivid. For instance, there was the little old lady whose delight it was to open a new account for each grandchild immediately on its arrival in this vale of tears—once, before the young person had even a name—and whenever opportunity served, she would dilate on the beauty, cleverness, and progress of each child in turn. At last there were as many as ten books, the right disposal of the pennies in each of which was a source of great excitement to her and considerable hindrance to us. By-and-by, as years went on, the children were able to relieve grandmother of her task occasionally, and presently her visits became few and far between—the walk tired her, she said;

and now, for some years, she has not been at all, and we have lost trace of her. The children may still be among our depositors, but one fancies that it was our old friend's personality and her fond love which gave them any individuality, for it would be hard to pick them out now for any cleverness or beauty above the average.

Then there was the bright lad whose open handsome face won our regard. It wanted only half a word to draw from him all his hopes and aspirations and the details of his daily life. Presently, he finds a place in a City office, and with delight tells the amount of his salary and the fact that the money deposited is saved by walking to town each day. By-and-by the amount dwindles to a very small sum. 'Only wears out shoe-leather to walk, you know.' As his collars grow in height and cuffs in length, so his deposits decrease in number, till he only appears at rare intervals to make deposits for brothers and sisters. When questioned about himself, he says with a jaunty air, 'What's the use of saving? Let's make the most of things while we have them, I say.' He, too, has not been to Our Bank for some time; can it be that the pernicious philosophies of City life have completely taken hold of his bright confiding nature? One hopes not, sincerely.

Then, as an instance of development in another direction, we remember the young lady who suffers under the possession of an abnormally developed nasal organ. This feature when large, is popularly supposed to indicate strength of character; but, in the strict canons of art, does not conduce to perfection of beauty; and when this young lady first began to attend Our Bank, no attempt was made by those in charge of her to minimise the inharmonious effects of her too prominent feature by the assistance of art in dress. She generally appeared in a small round hat, and with her hair strained back from her face and done up in a tight plait at the back. As she grew older, however, and could take these matters into her own hands, one soon noticed a difference. The hair was brought forward and allowed to fall loosely round the face; a large shady hat replaced the small round one; and she generally contrived to have some show of white, or a loose fluffy scarf round her neck, so that to-day her erstwhile defect serves but to give her a pleasantly striking personality.

Occasionally, Our Bank gains a tinge of romance, when we find a young man and woman with different surnames who have been industriously accumulating capital for some time, giving notice to withdraw simultaneously; and we discover that they require the money to set up house-keeping together. It is a singular thing, but the officials of Our Bank seem to have an intuitive understanding when the money is wanted for this purpose; there is an ill-concealed smile on the faces of the withdrawers, which tells its own tale; and we generally try to add a trifle of interest in the shape of a congratulatory word.

A novelist in search of names for his characters might do worse than dip into the ledger of Our Bank. It goes without saying that there is rather above than below the average number of Tom Smiths and John Joneses; but we consider 'Temperance Sherry' and 'Temperance Allport'—the latter surname being acquired by marriage—to be somewhat unique. It is possible to make a regu-

lation make-a-fuss-about-nothing-and-live-happy-ever-after heroine of 'Clare Mildmay' or 'Jessie Jenkinson'; to invest 'Jeanette Ducrane' with fierce and dark passions, or to turn 'Marianne Turpen' and 'Kathleen Killen' into heroines of the harum-scarum order. 'Absalom Hake' and 'Abigail Knock' are of the uncompromisingly severe type; but one almost hopes that 'Primrose Wood' will never change her surname, so charming is the suggestiveness of her quaint cognomen. 'Philadelphia Grubby' we count one of the curiosities of nomenclature.

Our depositors, as a rule, are not burdened with a superfluity of Christian names. Frederick Williams and Mary Janes of course abound, but they sometimes manage to arrive at good combinations, as, for example, the delightfully alliterative 'Richard Roland Radford.' Of surnames we have whole families of 'Muddles,' 'Wadlings,' and 'Grubbers,' and there used to be a 'Pitchfork' among our members.

Have we ever been defrauded? One or two attempts have been made by means of forged entries to swell the withdrawable balance; but our depositors are not skilful in the use of the pen, and the forgeries have been instantly detected. Once Our Bank was made the medium of an impudent and ingenious fraud on tradesmen in the neighbourhood; but the offender was soon brought to book. Quite recently, a lad with a passion for the sea managed to raise the means of getting his heart's desire by stealing his father's deposit book and withdrawing the money; but such cases are remarkably rare.

The directors of Our Bank do not indulge themselves in an annual dinner; but every now and again they give the juvenile members an entertainment in the shape of a magic-lantern show, accompanied by a generous distribution of buns, oranges, and sweets, and wild is the excitement when the tickets are given out.

The rebate of Board School fees had an immensely stimulating effect on the business of Our Bank, a large number of new accounts being opened.

Many of the early promoters and most zealous voluntary helpers at Our Bank have passed away; but were they aware of our present position, they would rejoice, we feel sure, in the success resulting from their earnest efforts. Our Bank has touched a class who would not perhaps be reached by any other agency, a class too independent to brook 'charitable' assistance, and too unlearned to take easily to the Post-office.

While we have spoken most about what may be termed the intermittent depositor, there are still very many who have persisted in a regular course of systematic saving; and if the final result is not riches, yet the limit allowed by the law—twenty pounds—has been over and over again reached by the most unlikely-looking depositors.

It is estimated that in banks similarly attached to Co-operative Societies there are now over one hundred thousand depositors, holding a capital of over one hundred and fifty thousand pounds; yet the chief value of these banks is felt to be, however, not so much in this accumulation of capital, as in the aid they afford to preparation for the hundred and one small exigencies of everyday life, and in the teaching they almost un-

consciously give in habits of forethought and thrift. For this, if for no other reason, one may say, as we feel sure our old Irishwoman would say, 'Good luck to them.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE World's Fair at Chicago marks an era in human progress which will not be soon forgotten. On account of its vast size and comprehensiveness, it will stand out from all enterprises of the kind, and will create as much sensation in the civilised world as did the prototype of all International Exhibitions in 1851. In one respect it far outshines its fore-runners, and that is in its display of electrical applications. In the last twenty years the applications of electricity have been marvellously developed; so much so, that many new and important industries have sprung up from it. Of these we need only mention the telephone, the incandescent carbon filament, and electric traction for railways. These inventions alone will make the closing years of the nineteenth century ever memorable, and they are worthily illustrated at the great Exhibition at Chicago.

Increased swiftness in ships—the substitution of iron and steel for wood—steam and the screw propeller for the unbought wind—these all demand improvement in the manner of fixing a ship's position on the waste of waters. Lieutenant W. H. Beehler, United States Navy, of the Washington Hydrographic Office, has devised an instrument to be known as the 'Solarometer,' by means of which a ship's geographical position and the error of her compass may be obtained directly by observations of the heavenly bodies, whenever visible, without having to make the usual elaborate computations. Star observations are too frequently disregarded, and the sextant is useless when the horizon is obscured, even though the sun shine brightly in the celestial concave. The Solarometer will be specially valuable in just such an emergency, for it is rare that a star is not visible for a few moments on any given night, and the horizon no longer requires consideration. Safety of large liners will doubtless be ensured by the use of the Solarometer; but, inasmuch as three hundred and eighty pounds of mercury are required, it is not improbable that its weight and cost will militate against general adoption by navigators.

The German Admiralty have recently adopted a flashing light for signalling purposes—the invention of Professor Schevin—the principle of which is a stream of powdered magnesium, which is caused to fall into a benzine flame. The flashes are so bright that they are said to be visible by daylight at a distance of six miles, which statement is probably an exaggeration. We may mention that a lamp very similar to this, in which a powder consisting largely of magnesium is propelled into a spirit-flame, was devised about sixteen years ago in our own country by Captain Colomb, and was, if we remember rightly, approved by our Admiralty and adopted by them. The recent use of the flashlight for photographic purposes has, doubtless, renewed attention to this method of signalling.

A writer in an American paper called 'The Rural New Yorker' dwells upon the advantage of soaking potato-seed tubers in a solution of corrosive sublimate previous to planting, as a sure remedy against the blackened condition of potatoes known as potato scab. He asserts that the disease is due to a parasitic cause which operates from below, and that, therefore, the common expedient of spraying the plants is simply a waste of energy. The paper is illustrated by photographs, which show the condition of the doctored tubers and those which were untreated side by side; and it is pleaded that the treatment is easy of application, and results in an increased yield of potatoes. The plan recommended is to soak the seed-tubers for one and a half hours 'in a one-one-thousandth solution of corrosive sublimate.' It is not quite clear what strength of solution is here indicated; if it means one part of the salt in one thousand parts of water, this would be equal to one ounce to six gallons, which would be, we should think, needlessly strong for such an active poison.

Weather forecasts are being promulgated in New England in an altogether novel manner. On the summit of Mount Washington, an electric search-light is placed, and flashes its warnings over the surrounding country, the signals being well seen at a distance of eighty miles. From Boston the local forecast official sends out daily three hundred printed copies of weather forecasts for the next twenty-four hours. These go by rail, and are dropped at the various stations *en route*. At these stations the forecasts are immediately displayed, each in a frame provided by the Weather Bureau. It is found that this is the quickest method of bringing the forecasts under the notice of the public.

We have already noticed in these columns the introduction of what is called a Hydrocycle, that is, a boat which is propelled by paddle-wheel or screw worked pedal fashion by the occupant or occupants. Such a vessel with a crew of three can now often be seen on the reaches of the Upper Thames, accomplishing with ease a speed of six miles per hour; and this same hydrocycle has recently distinguished itself by beating the sculling record for the journey between Oxford and Putney, a distance of one hundred and two miles. In this journey there are thirty-one locks, and the delay in getting through them is often very vexatious. The sculling record was a trifle over twenty-three hours; but the hydrocycle covered the distance in nineteen hours. It would be interesting to know whether the work of propelling this novel form of boat is more or less exhausting than rowing. Possibly, this would be a matter governed by individual temperament and habit.

The Special Commission appointed under the auspices of 'The Lancet' to inquire into the water-supply and drainage of the city of Chicago, in view of the numbers of persons attracted by the World's Fair, reports that the water, taken from different points on Lake Michigan, is free from objection, provided that due care is exercised in filtering it, and that the water be cooled without contact with ice. It is obvious that if ice of unknown origin be placed in water to lower its temperature, previous filtration is rendered futile.

In a country parish not far from London a new form of water-cart may be seen in action, which seems to us a distinct improvement upon the ordinary kind. The water from the cart is discharged into a trough, below which are two horizontal partitioned wheels, which revolve at a rapid rate, and are geared to the main wheels of the cart. The water as fast as it runs upon these wheels is cast abroad in fine spray by centrifugal motion. This is a far more effective manner of laying the dust than the usual plan of flooding the road with water. Cyclists especially will rejoice in a method of watering which stops the dust without waterlogging the roads and making their progress slow.

Mr Watson Smith recently delivered before the Chemical and Physical Society of University College, London, a lecture on Diseases incident to Workpeople in Chemical and other Industries. With regard to that terrible disease of the jaw (necrosis) which attacks workers with phosphorus, the author tells us that the danger is far greater in the match factories than in those where the phosphorus is made. By using red or amorphous phosphorus, such as is now the custom in manufacturing matches which strike only on the box, all risk of disease is obviated. It is mostly in the small factories abroad where the yellow phosphorus is used, and it is impossible to stop the mischief without State interference. Referring to the new method of white-lead manufacture in which the carbonate gives way to the sulphate, the lecturer pointed out incidentally that the sulphate would be converted into carbonate by sodium bicarbonate. Hence, if a person is exposed to the dust of lead sulphate, a draught of the ordinary effervescent beverages may at once produce in his digestive organs the actively poisonous lead carbonate.

The 'Pathfinder' is a novel vessel which has been designed and built by Messrs Merryweather, the well-known fire engineers, and its purpose is to act as an hydraulic dredger, a floating fire-engine, or as an appliance for pumping out submerged ships. At its bow is a well, through which can be sunk a telescopic tube of copper, the other end of which is connected with a powerful steam-pump. This tube delivers a powerful jet of water upon any shoal which requires deepening, and very quickly removes it. At a recent trial on the Essex coast, five different portions of a shallow were thus operated upon in thirty-two minutes, an average increase of depth of eleven feet being obtained; and the amount of excavation was roughly estimated at one hundred tons of solid matter. It may be pointed out that by this system and by working at ebb-tide, the matter removed from a water-way is carried away piecemeal, and deposited over a large area; there is therefore no necessity of taking away the removed soil in barges, as is customary in other methods of dredging.

It is said that an experiment was lately made at West Lynn in order to test the tractive power of electricity against steam. A locomotive engine was coupled to a large electric car, and at the same moment they were started in opposite directions. At first, neither gained any advantage; but when sand was thrown on the track, the electric car gained the victory. We are sorry that no more details of the experiment are forth-

coming; for it would be interesting to learn the indicated horse-power both of the locomotive and of the steam-engine which furnished energy to the dynamo on the electric car.

While in this country we have been mainly exercised in the problem of heating railway carriages, Indian engineers have been endeavouring to find some satisfactory way of cooling them. The latest device for this purpose is described in an Indian technical journal, and consists of an automatic arrangement by which curtains suspended across an open trap-door in the carriage are kept saturated with water. These curtains are let down over the fore-end of the carriage, covering the trap-door in whichever direction the train is travelling. In addition to this arrangement, there is a revolving punkah fitted with fans, which is kept in constant motion while the train proceeds on its way.

A French paper recently pointed out that although asbestos was known by the ancients, who used it for crematory purposes, and although in more recent times it was spun into tablecloths, serviettes, &c., its applications were very limited until a few years ago. Twelve years back, not more than four articles were made of asbestos, whereas now at least one hundred things are made from it, and the list is ever extending. One of the most interesting and important applications of the material is in connection with ceramics, and it is believed that asbestos pottery will presently become very popular. The earthenware made from it has a peculiar fineness of grain which is unapproachable by any china-ware, and it can be made into statuettes, or enamelled so as to present a very attractive appearance. Asbestos pipes are highly appreciated by smokers; the material can be used for filtering the strongest acids; and as an insulator for electrical purposes it is unequalled. Asbestos is found in Siberia, the Tyrol, the Pyrenees, Greenland, Brazil, and Canada. There is no dearth of it, and its applications are on the increase.

It is generally known that when the junction of two dissimilar metals is heated, an electric current is generated; and upon this observation, made by Seebeck in 1821, many thermo-electrical devices have been based, some of these yielding sufficient electrical energy to be turned to practical account. A new form of thermo-electric stove has recently been described by a correspondent of the 'Times,' and it is said to be capable of furnishing both heat and light for a room twenty-one feet square. The stove is about three feet high and twenty inches in diameter, and contains the metallic bars, which, heated on the slow-combustion principle, furnish current sufficient to light six glow-lamps each of eight candle-power. During the daylight hours the current from such a stove can be stored in accumulators and used when required. This Thermo-electric Stove is the invention of Dr Girard, and can be seen at work at the office of Messrs Renshaw & Co., of Queen Anne's Mansions, Westminster. The fuel consumption is said to be only forty pounds of a mixture of anthracite coal and coke per twenty-four hours.

Some very interesting 'Notes on Gesso-work,' by Walter Crane, appeared in the May number of the 'Studio,' and it is there indicated that there is a revival of this form of art-decoration, which

is aptly described as being midway between painting and sculpture. There are many ancient examples of this beautiful form of decoration, which doubtless found its birth in Italy; but its most popular modern exponent is the pastry-cook, who by similar means decorates with liquid sugary compound the 'iced' surface of a bride-cake. Gesso is a mixture of whiting, glue, and resin, or similar materials, which is employed in a semi-plastic and semi-liquid condition, so that it may be trailed from a brush so as to form lines, or masses which can be built up on a flat surface so as to produce forms of any required kind. The article referred to is illustrated by some beautiful examples by the author, and this method of decoration is shown to produce very fine results. The necessary material is now sold in the form of a powder, which only requires to be mixed with water to be ready for use.

The manufacture of silk from wood-pulp would seem to be at first sight as mythical as the extraction of sunbeams from cucumbers; but it is a simple fact that the work is now being accomplished, and that a mill for the manufacture of the silk is in full operation at Besançon. The process is that of M. de Chardonnet, and is described in detail in a recent Report by the United States consul at St Etienne. It may be summarised as follows: The wood-pulp, such as is employed in paper-making, after being carefully purified by acid and dried in alcohol, is dissolved in a mixture of pure ether and alcohol, thus forming a viscous collodion like that used in photography. This collodion is placed in a vessel, where, under air-pressure, it is first of all forced through a filtering apparatus, and then into a horizontal tube having a number of glass exit tubes of very small bore. From these tubes the collodion issues in threads so fine that six of them must be combined to make a strand of the necessary consistency for weaving. On its exit, the thread passes through a vessel of water, which robs it of its surplus ether and alcohol, and thus helps it to become solid. It is also subsequently passed through a bath of ammonia, which takes from it its highly inflammable properties. It is believed that this silk has a great future before it; but whether it will prove a dangerous rival to the product of the silkworm remains to be seen.

The Meteorological Society is anxious to secure the co-operation of amateur photographers throughout the country in forming a collection of photographs which it is thought may be useful in helping to solve many problems connected with that branch of science to which it devotes attention. Firstly, a collection of groups of cloud photographs is wanted, from which it is hoped a better cloud-nomenclature can be drawn up than the one which now obtains; and more especially are required those delicate breaths of vapour known as cirrus clouds, which are so often seen high overhead. Hints on the best way of securing these difficult objects can be obtained from the Society; but we may mention here that the best results are obtained by using a mirror of black glass as a medium for reflection between objects and lens. The appearance of the bolder forms of cloud on the approach of a thunder-storm will also form valuable photographs. Beyond these, pictures of lightning are asked for, and pictures of any kind which afford evi-

dence of atmospheric disturbances. Photographs of damage resulting from floods, unusual wind-storms, and the like, will also be acceptable. We feel quite sure that many amateur photographers, whose usual work is of a comparatively aimless character, will be glad to join in a scheme which will give them the consciousness that they are contributing to a good cause.

To those who have an interest in the preserving of fresh eggs, the following notes from a correspondent may be useful: 'Last year we had some eggs, as an experiment, rubbed over with vaseline, and then packed in boxes with dry salt. The boxes were turned over every fortnight, to prevent the yolks settling and adhering to the shell. After the lapse of four months, the first box was opened, the eggs wiped clear from vaseline, and they were then boiled along with fresh-laid ones. As a matter of actual fact, it would have been difficult to distinguish one from the other, if we had not known that some of the eggs had been preserved. This year we commenced preserving by the same method only eight weeks before the time at which I write; and although the test is a much shorter one, it is quite sufficient to prove the value of the process. The fortnightly turning over is an essential feature, as it keeps the yolks in position; and the impossibility of doing this with lime-water, brine, or any wet method, condemns these at once, on account of the adhesion of the yolk to the shell, irrespective of the flavour, which with most other processes is not at all satisfactory. The result of our test this year is as follows: The first lot of eggs preserved were laid March 12th, and were rubbed with vaseline and covered with salt on the 13th; the lids of the boxes were then tied down, and the boxes turned upside down every fortnight or so. Eight weeks afterwards, the first box was opened; two eggs were poached and found perfect; two were boiled for two different persons who are in the habit of taking a new-laid egg daily. One of these two persons, not knowing the egg was a preserved one, remarked that it was very fresh and nice, but that the hens must be getting short of green food, as the yolk was paler than usual. This remark proved clearly that the egg was not passed over without critical notice; and the fact that the yolk was pale is easily accounted for, as during March the hens were practically without green food, they being kept in confinement, and depending for green stuff on the garden waste and grass-cutting from the tennis lawn. The eggs had the curdy, milky appearance which fresh-laid ones lose in about two days, and also the inimitable flavour peculiar to those which have not been handled much.'

THE NEW WELDLESS CHAIN.

THE use of chains dates far back into the world's history, gold chains being frequently mentioned by the earliest Egyptian chroniclers. Turning, however, to modern times, the first extant published patent for chains was obtained in 1634 by a blacksmith named Philip White, who sought, in his own words, 'a way for the mooring of shippes with iron chaynes by finding out the true heating ppareing and temping of lyron for that ppose, and that he hath nowe attayned to the true vse of the said chaynes, and that the

same will be for the great saving of cordage and safety of shippes, and will redound to the good of our common wealth.' White was granted a patent for fourteen years, and paid five pounds per annum to the Exchequer at Westminster for protection in making his 'chaynes.'

The use of iron chains for mooring purposes in the British navy was advocated in 1690 by Sir Cloudesley Shovel; but it was not until the commencement of the present century that their use for vessels became general, when, in the hands of numerous hard-headed, shrewd mechanics and inventors, the chain reached its present form and perfection, though it was some little time ere prices reached reasonable limits.

It is on record that a vessel, built at Monkwearmouth in 1809, had one chain cable, costing forty-three shillings per hundredweight; indeed, such price was deemed very moderate for those days; for in 1811 chain cables averaged sixty pounds per ton, a rate which has gradually fallen to about twelve pounds or less per ton at the present day.

Viewing the importance of the chain industry, special interest attaches to attempts now being made to introduce into the market a new class of Weldless Chain—namely, one whose links are formed in such a manner as to require no joint whatever. The strength of a chain is proverbially that of its weakest link; and in like manner the strength of the link itself is that of its weakest part—namely, the weld or joint; and no further comment is necessary to demonstrate the superiority of a chain made up of links having no joint or weld whatever; whilst, owing to the absence of such welding, a class of steel of much higher carbon, and therefore increased strength, can be used, those steels which weld well being the softer and weaker qualities.

The design of the links of the new chain is exceedingly ingenious: the wire to form the link is bent into the shape of an elongated U, the ends of which are passed through the next link, bent back, and finally twisted on themselves in such a manner as to leave no danger of slipping loose, nor, the ends being left pointing inwards, is there any danger of their fouling anything.

The chain is called by the makers the 'Triumph;' and experiments have lately been made by Professor Hele-Shaw, of University College, Liverpool, as to the comparative strength of the weldless and welded chains. The strength of the new chain is remarkable, owing to the absence of all welding; and careful and reliable experiments have demonstrated it to have a breaking strain nearly double that of the single section of steel out of which it is made, and approximately three times that of the best British welded chains.

The facility presented by the new chain for speedy expedition and economical manufacture forms a powerful factor in its favour, no fewer than a dozen machines being readily controlled by a single man assisted by one boy. These machines—which in themselves mark an important advance in the chain industry, for up to the present time welded chains have been made mainly by hand—exhibit great ingenuity in their design; and the facility with which they convert reels of wire into fathoms of the new weldless chain leaves little doubt as to the success of the

invention we are now enabled to lay before our readers. The rapid demand for their product in America has induced the patentees of the new chain to effect arrangements for laying down works in this country; and it is anticipated that an establishment at Liverpool will shortly be in active operation.

Without entering into details, or unnecessarily going into the minutiae of quotations, we may briefly say that the new chain will be placed in the market at less than one-fifth the price at present ruling for a welded chain of equal strength; whilst, moreover, the new chain would only weigh about one-half the weight of the welded, a desideratum of no small moment when large quantities have to be handled and carried.

Enough has been said to demonstrate the value of the new weldless chain, and to emphasise the far-reaching benefits to accrue to every industry using them, as well as to the public at large, from reduced cost, coupled with diminished weight and augmented strength.

A TRANSFORMATION.

'Twas but a narrow, city way
Filled by a busy throng,
Before I heard that sun-bright day
A Blackbird's joyous song;
Transformed was that squalid street
The while his loud notes rang—
The early dews were round my feet,
The cowslips round me sprang.

No common sounds were in my ear:
I heard the ringdove's cry,
The thrushes singing sweet and clear,
The skylark's chanson high;
The wind that fanned my brow had come
O'er daisied hills and leas,
O'er hollows pale with hawthorn foam
And wild anemones.

His amber rain the sun-god shed;
I saw the greening haze
Of opening buds on boughs o'erhead;
I saw the gorse-gold's blaze;
I saw the crimson fir-cones sway
On odorous larch and pine:
A Blackbird's song on that spring day
Made viewless glories mine.

M. ROCK.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them in FULL.
- 4th. Offerings of Verse should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

If the above rules are complied with, the Editor will do his best to ensure the safe return of ineligible papers.

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